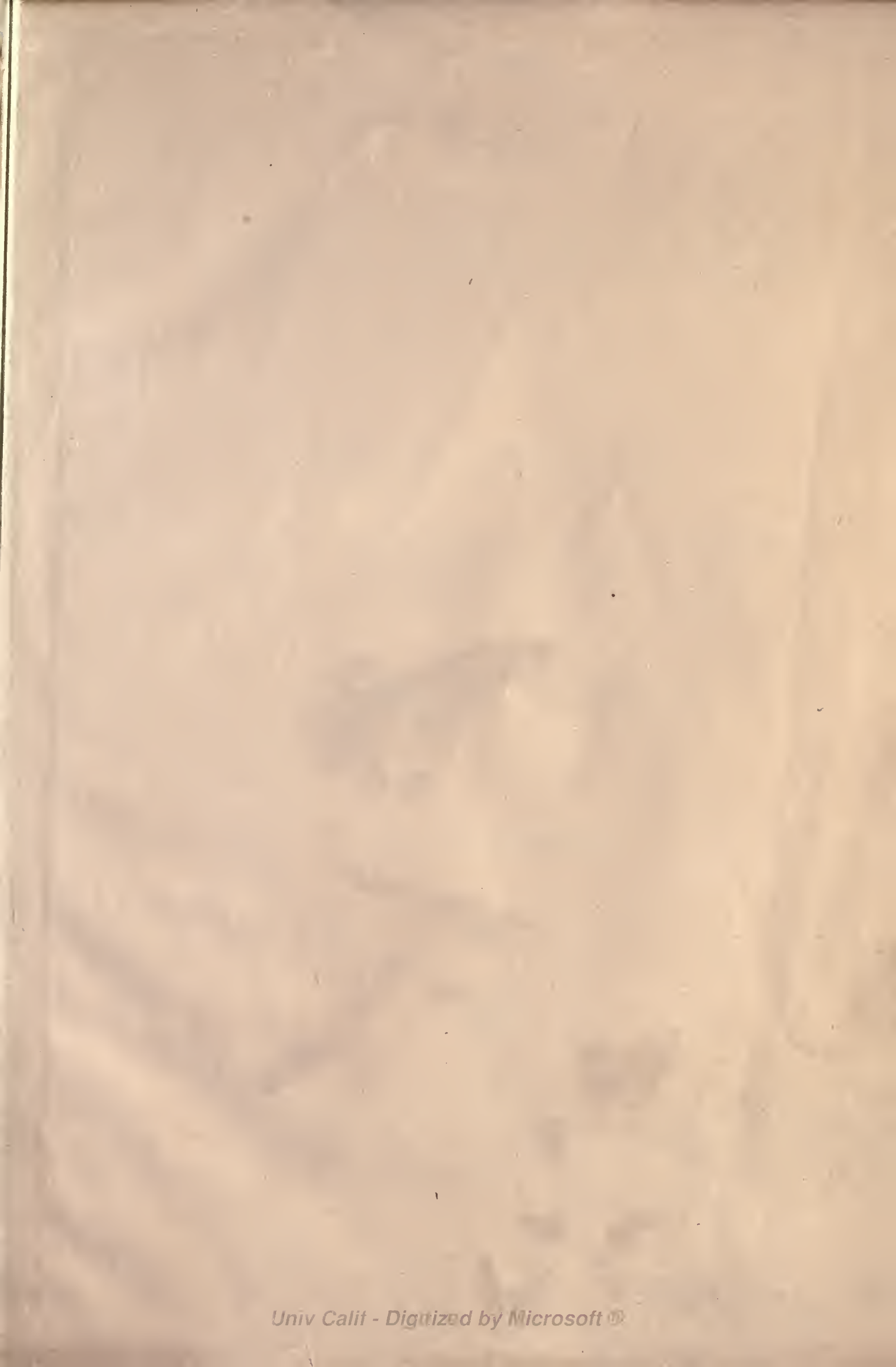



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LES

BOURGEOIS

DE LA COMPAGNIE

DU

NORD-OUEST

RÉCITS DE VOYAGES, LETTRES ET RAPPORTS INÉDITS RELATIFS
AU NORD-OUEST CANADIEN

PUBLIÉS AVEC UNE

ESQUISSE HISTORIQUE

et des Annotations

PAR

L. R. MASSON

Deuxième Série



QUÉBEC
DE L'IMPRIMERIE GÉNÉRALE A. COTÉ ET Cie

1890

RÉCITS DE VOYAGES

LETTRES ET RAPPORTS INÉDITS

RÈLATIFS AU

NORD-OUEST CANADIEN

II

DEUXIÈME SÉRIE

1. M. John McDonald, Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. "*Autobiographical Notes*", 1791-1816.
2. M. George Keith, Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. Lettres à l'honorable R. McKenzie: 1807-1817.—Les départements de la Rivière Mackenzie et du "Lac d'Ours"—*Great Bear Lake*.—Légendes.
3. M. John Johnston, traiteur libre, du Sault Ste-Marie. "*An account of Lake Superior*", 1792-1807.
4. M. Samuel H. Wilcocke. *Narrative of circumstances attending the death of the late Benjamin Frobisher, Esq., a Partner of the North-West Company*", 1819. — Luttes contre Lord Selkirk et la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson.
5. M. Duncan Cameron, Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. "*A sketch of the customs, manners and way of living of the Natives in the barren Country about Nipigon*":—Extraits de son journal, 1804-1805.—La traite avec les sauvages.
6. M. Peter Grant, Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. "*The Sauteux Indians*", vers 1804.

7. M. James McKenzie, Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. Extraits de son journal de 1799. — Le département d'Athabasca.
8. M. James McKenzie. " *Some account of the King's Posts, the Labrador Coast and the Island of Anticosti, by an Indian Trader residing there several years ; with a Description of the Natives, and the Journal of a trip through those Countries, in* 1808, *by the same Person.*"
9. *The* " *North-West agreements* ", 1802 and 1804. — Actes constitutifs de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest.

JOHN M^c^DONALD OF GARTH

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

1791-1816



Antesque Dios fuese Dios
O que el Sol illuminab los penascos,
Ia era noble casa de los Velascos (1).

The proud Velascos of Spain claimed an ancestry dating from the creation and beyond ! Mr. McDonald had not quite so exalted an opinion of the McDonalds, and felt content with claiming for them an existence coeval with and independent of " Old Noah " !

" It is asserted in the Highlands of Old Scotland, " he says, in the memorandum which prefaces his autobiographical notes, " that the McDonald's are coeval with the family of Old Noah, &c. ; that they had a boat of their own on Lock Lomond, independant of the ark, by which the chief of the clan saved as many as the boat

(1) " Before God was God. Before the Sun brightened the mountain tops, existed the noble House of the Velascos. "

Noble come el Rey, e aun.................... " As Noble as the King, and even......... " wrote a Spanish nobleman under his signature. Being asked what he meant by " *e aun* ", he replied that, being a Knight, he was as noble as his King, and, being a Castillan, he was still more so, the King was only a Frenchman.

could safely hold, of course the finest and fairest of both sexes. Hence the superiority of that race above all others ever since.

" Be that as it may, they have not, at any rate, fallen off, either in peace or war, from any of the race of Adam. "

Mr. McDonald was born in the Highlands of Scotland in 1774, " of gentle blood, " as he says, " being a descendant of the Lord of the Isles. "

His father, a captain in the old 84th, had destined him for the Army, and had obtained for him—although he was then only fourteen years old—a commission in the same regiment. In consequence, however, of an accident which had happened to his right arm during his childhood, he was unable to pass the medical examination necessary for admission to the Army (1).

Having soon after lost his father, his grand uncle, General Small, and an older brother bound him with Mr. Simon MacTavish, whom they had met in England, as an apprentice clerk to the North-West Company, and in the spring of 1791, he left for Canada, his new home.

He arrived in Quebec on the 1st of June, and on the 15th of the same month he was on board the canoe at

(1) Mr. McDonald's arm became slightly deformed in consequence of this accident, and the old Canadian *voyageurs*, in order to distinguish him from the numerous other McDonalds and McDonells, used to call him " *Monsieur MacDinel, le bras croche.* "

Lachine, having spent in Montreal the time barely sufficient to present his letters of introduction and to make the necessary preparations for his long voyage and for the new life to which he was destined. He was seventeen years old !

Though rather small in stature and at a disadvantage on account of the injury he had sustained to his right arm, Mr. McDonald appears to have been of a quarrelsome and pugnacious disposition. He had hardly boarded the good ship "Canada" which took him to Quebec than he managed to pick a quarrel with a young officer, a fellow passenger, and challenged him to go on deck, on a very dark night, and fight a duel with pocket pistols ! This freak greatly amused the officers on board, and Mr. McDonald was the first to make fun of it later.

He had great faith in his pocket pistols, and was very apt to resort to them as the readiest mode of settling his little controversies with his mates. Fortunately for him, while at Grand Portage, he happened to fall in with a burly North-West clerk, who, instead of yeilding to his bad temper or accepting the judgment of the pocket pistols, went for a bit of rope and threatened the ambitious young duellist with a good thrashing. This seems to have quieted him for some time.

Mr. McDonald, like most North-Westers, was brave, rash, reckless and domineering. He had a most decided disposition to seek redress at his own hands, and never

underrated his own doings and prowess. He would have probably done poor service in the Army, but he was just such a man as was required in the indisciplined and lawless wilds of the North-West. His indomitable energy and pluck carried him through where many would have failed, and his frank and generous nature endeared him to many.

The beneficial influence of his high character was particularly felt when the first open acts of hostility broke out between Mr. Miles McDonell, governor of Red River and the North-West Company, in 1814, by the seizure and confiscation by the former of the provisions destined for the northern departments.

Mr. McDonald strenuously exerted himself to bring about a compromise between the two parties, explaining to Lord Selkirk's people the position in which the servants of the North-West Company would be placed if they persisted in detaining in their possession the pemican and provisions required for the subsistance of their clerks and *voyageurs* in the northern regions. He, at the same time, explained to his co-partners in the North-West Company the *odium* which would fall on them if the Colonist were totally deprived of the seized provisions. By the good sense and the conciliatory spirit he displayed in this negociation he, at last, brought the two parties to effect an agreement by which a considerable portion of the confiscated provisions were to be re-

turned to their legitimate owners, and security given for the payment of the balance retained (1).

Mr. McDonald definitively left the North-West in 1816 and settled at Gray's Creek, in the county of Glengary, where he died at the good old age of 86, leaving several children, among whom, the late Judge Rolland McDonald, of Ontario, and Mr. de Bellefeuille McDonald, who married a Miss Harwood and to whose son, Mr. de Lery MacDonald, I am indebted for the permission to give to the public the following copious extracts from his grand-father's autobiographical notes (2).

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(1) See Gabriel Franchère : *Relation d'un voyage à la côte Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique septentrionale.* (1810-1814).

(2) See : Rev. Robert Campbell : " History of the St. Gabriel-Street Church, Montreal. "

Garth Gray's Creek, 1st March, 1859.

Dear de Bellefeuille,

Yourself and my dear daughter-in-law have been long since desirous to know something of your forefathers—being a stranger in a strange land—and some sketch of my long life.

You will remember that I am in my eighty-ninth (89) (1) year and that my memory is failing..

....

However, I shall try and meet your wishes, however incorrect and as briefly as I can.

I am, Dear de Bellefeuille,

Your affectionate father,

John McDonald.

De Bellefeuille McDonald, Esq.

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(1) More probably eighty-fifth ; see page 11.

....

....

I was from school and too young when I left Old Scotland to know much of my relations, or care much for them, consequently this narrative which I have given you is very concise, and my absence from home ever since has left me very little acquainted with any of them.

My grand uncle, General Small, met the late Simon McTavish, head partner of the Old North-West Company, in London, and, with my brother Angus, of Pall Mall, bound me as a clerk to that Company for a definite number of years. At the end of my service, I was to get a share in the Concern.

On the 19 of April, 1791, I sailed from Greenock in the good **1791.** ship "Canada," Captain Harvy, master. Among the passengers were Lt. Col. Scot, of the 60th I believe, his lady and two children; also a Capt Boyce and Ensign Kenedy. I was a good looking lad of 17 years old, and I soon became a favorite. In those days a passage of six weeks was considered very good; we got to Quebec on the 1st of June.

I occupied the same stateroom with Kenedy, a tall young Scot. Some how or other, we quarrelled; I challenged him to go on deck in a dark night; I had pocket pistols! Colonel Scot heard what passed and it amused him very much..................

At Quebec, Mr. McTavish, who had also landed from London, met Capt Harvy who told him I was at the hotel " Franks " with Colonel Scot, who took great care of me. I was sent to Mr. McTavish's quarters, and he told me to proceed immediately to Montreal.

I left Quebec on the 3rd June with a Doctor Stewart and got to Montreal the 5th, in a calash............. I had some letters of introduction and particularly one to Col. Campbell, of the Indian Department, who was well acquainted with General Small. Col. Campbell was very kind to me ; I dined with him, etc. He was married to a daughter of St-Luc La Corne, as ugly a woman as he was a handsome man. I received great kindness from many others during my stay...

....

" About the of 15th June, 1791, I left Lachine, under the patronage of the late Simon McTavish, in a large birch canoe manned by 14 choice *voyageurs* and our cook. A crowd of friends and spectators were there to witness our departure, a great event before the time of steamers. We landed at Ste Anne where the men paid their devotion to their titular Saint.........................

....

The wind having fallen, we proceeded on Lake Huron to the Sault St Mary's, where the Company had an establishment on the south side of the river. There was here a small settlement ; Messrs Nolin and Johnston, who were, I believe, Indian traders, were the principal persons here. We made the portage and proceeded on our frail bark on Lake Superior to the Old Grand Portage, where we safely arrived on the fourth or fifth day, after visiting the trading posts at River Pic and Michipicoton.

There were great rejoicings at Grand Portage on Mr McTavish's arrival : several Partners were there from the interior, as well

as the Agents from Montreal, who conducted that branch of the business (1). The *tout ensemble* seemed strange. During a stay of perhaps a fortnight here I had a quarrel with a clerk, a large Englishman of the name of Harrisson. He threw a loaf of bread at me, and I called him out—with my pocket pistols again.—He took a rope and said : "this is my pistol." He was afterwards under my command, and a very good fellow, but no trader : he never could learn to speak French ! I believe he died in the country.

I was here appointed to be under the care of Mr. Angus Shaw, an excellent trader, a man who managed his men and the Indians well, and a kind Bourgeois to me. We started in his canoe—a much smaller one than those from Lachine—until we overtook his brigade of loaded canoes which had left Fort Charlotte, at the north end of Grand Portage some days previous. In two or three days we overtook them, and he put me on board of the guide's canoe, one Antyme, who took great care of me.

....

At Cumberland Lake, several of the partners, with the Athabasca brigade, joined us, amongst whom was the celebrated Sir Alexander McKenzie. Lake Cumberland is noted for its fine sturgeon.

We proceeded to the north end of the lake and ascended *Rivière Maligne* to Beaver Lake, and from thence, by lakes, rapids and portages, to *Ile-à-la-Crosse*, which was the next settlement...

We made but a short stay at *Ile-à-la-Crosse*, so named as being a famous resort to the Indians in playing their favorite game. We made the Long *Traverse* to Beaver River and found this river very low, it being as it were a mere rivulet compared to the other rivers. It abounds in wild game................................ ....

(1) The annual general summer meeting.

We made our way slowly up this river for several days—snow was falling—until we got to *Portage d'Orignal*; we then struck off from Beaver River, made a long portage to *Lac d'Orignal*, and in about the distance of ten to fifteen miles we got to the settlement, where there were several Indians of the Cree and Assiniboine tribes waiting for our arrival (1).

Mr. Shaw made the necessary arrangements for the winter. Ice having already frozen up our passage, we got there just in time ; next day the lake,—a good large lake—was frozen over.

Here we were fixed for the winter, in new and comfortable *chantiers*, with plenty of fire wood and good accessories. The fish was not of a good kind, not the real white fish, but, occasionally, the Indians brought in the flesh of deer of different kinds; no bread, which I thought rather strange, nor any vegetables, only fish and deer meat; *toujours perdrix!* and not too much of that, at times.

Towards spring, Mr. Shaw sent me with an old interpreter, good old Simon, in search of Indians, a journey of several days on foot, in snow and water. I have often since reflected at what would have become of me if the old man had died on the way, or if we had accidentally separated; I did not know the way in the forest, and could not have returned !................................

We fell upon the Indian camp, and, after feasting a couple of days, made our way back to the Lake.—Thus from Greenock, in

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(1) It would appear by the above that the *Lac d'Orignal* Fort, established, in 1789, by Mr. Angus Shaw, was at a lake of that name on the upper course of the Beaver River and north-east of Edmonton, and not at *Lac d'Orignal* near *Tête Jaune Cache*, the source of the Fraser River, as stated in the foot note to be found at page 31—" Reminiscences "—of the first series of these documents. Mr. Shaw, when he says—page 33— that *Fort des Prairies* was about eight days distance to the south-east, was probably speaking of the old French *Fort des Prairies* on the lower Saskatchewan.

There still exists a post or station at *Lac d'Orignal*, north-east of Edmonton ; it is probably Mr. Shaw's old fort of 1789.

the Clyde, my first "Summer tour" was to Lake d'Orignal, a zigzag distance of perhaps eight or ten thousand miles !

In the spring of 1792, I killed the first swan. I was quite proud of it. About the middle of May we got a passage clear of ice on the lake. The men got the canoes, furs and baggage across in a couple of days. While doing so, I shot a couple of beavers, which were there plentiful. We made our way slowly down the Beaver River ; it was then the month of June, and a very late season. **1792.** Climate.

In crossing from the entrance of the River to Fort *Isle-à-la-Crosse*, we were all nearly lost in the *Traverse*, the ice nearly crushing the canoes between two fields. We got ashore however, and remained until the 10th June when the lake was clear....... We got the brigade at Grand Portage in good time, the furs without any damage.

We were at Grand Portage a couple of weeks refreshing, outfitting, &c., meeting the Montreal Agents and feasting on the best of every thing and the best of fish. Sir Alexander MacKenzie was then one of the Agents of the Company, and was preparing for his voyage of discovery to the Pacific across the Rocky Mountains; General Small had requested of him to take me with him. He wrote to me, but I had become attached to Mr. Shaw and expressed my reluctance and declined.

I was then ordered to return with the same brigade and the same guide to Lake d'*Orignal* and deliver the charge to another, a young lad of the name of Grame (?), who had been in the country before me, and some years older, and so soon as I had done so, at *Isle-à-la-Crosse*, we were to proceed to *Lac d'Orignal* and Mr. Shaw, who was to go to the Saskatchewan, was to send for me as his assistant in that department; Mr James Finlay,

a partner, being also in the same department, lower down about two hundred miles, at *Fort de l'Isle*—on an island....................

....

The Phantom Coach.

During this trip, Mr. Grame related to me a circumstance which savours something of the second thought.

The winter previous, he had gone with a couple of men from the fort of *Isle-à la-Crosse* to some Indian camp,—distance about twenty miles—with dogs and sleighs for some furs and the flesh of a moose-deer. On their return on the lake, the night being as clear as generally in such a latitude when about full-moon, he had got ahead of his sleighs, which were heavily laden, and being within a mile of home, at a point or peninsula well known to myself, he sat down to await his men and smoke his pipe. While so engaged, he heard a rustling behind him, as it were a gust of wind. He turned round, and plainly saw a coach, with two horses milk-white, driving towards him, and which, when near him, rose in the air and passed. He plainly saw three persons in the coach, and saw it alight at a small river near by. I told him he must have been dosing and half asleep; he declared not, and he was a good religious lad.

This would all have passed for a dream was it not that, next season, having gone out duck hunting with one of his men, neither were ever seen again, but the canoe was found upset at the mouth of the river. There is, surely, something in this more than superstition.

We got to our winter quarter at *Lac d'Orignal*, Moose Lake, in better time than last season and found there old Simon, who had been left in charge, and a few Indians waiting for our arrival.

We had not been many days in our winter quarters when a couple of men, with an Indian woman as their guide arrived,

with each a horse for themselves, a saddled one for me and two for my baggage and provisions.

They rested a day or two, and I left with them, rejoicing at the idea of joining again Mr. Shaw, whose kind treatment had attached me to him as to a father. He told the Indians I was his little brother.

After three or four days in strong woods, we came to the border of the prairies, when the guide told me to follow an Indian trail which was perceptible. I went along and met an Indian hunting on my path; he stood till within a short distance, laid down his gun on the grass, as much as to say—seeing me almost a boy—"do not be afraid." He pointed out my way and I soon arrived at my destination, where I found Mr. Shaw, with about sixty men, putting up houses and erecting stockades for safety and for winter quarters...

Fort George established.

The new fort was upon the margin of a fine hummock of pine, upon a rising hill or bank, with the noble Sascatchewan in front, its banks covered with strong wood for perhaps a mile in breadth and twenty in length along the river. Here we passed the winter in a new country, and, consequently, filled with all kinds of animals.

The tribes of Indians who visited us during the winter were the Strong Wood and Prairie Crees: the Strong Wood and Prairie Assiniboils, the savage Blackfeet, the Piegan and Blood Indians, very numerous tribes who spoke the same language, and had been once of the same tribe. There were also the Sarcees, a small tribe which had been cut off in war.........................

In May, we made all the preparations, putting the canoes in order, making *bateaux* and pemican, packing furs, and the 15th, we were all ready to embark for our *rendez-vous* at Grand Portage; **1793.**

all afloat on the Grand Sascatchewan, swollen by the melting snow from the Rocky Mountains and its tributary streams; innumerable herds of buffaloes and deers and many grizzly bears on its banks, feeding and crossing in such numbers that we often got our canoes amongst them and shot hundreds without need...

We got all safe to Cumberland depot, and deposited the pemican for the northern departments, where nothing of the kind can be procured. This is the usual mode of supply. Care is taken to procure, if possible, a sufficient quantity to enable all the brigades to proceed without delay....... ...... Another supply also came from Red River, the Selkirk settlement, the depot being at the entrance of river Winnipeg, now Fort Alexander.

We left Cumberland generally about the 1st of June, and made our way in full spirits and health to head-quarters, where we met the gentlemen from Montreal in good fellowship, after an absence of twelve months. The men, on arrival at Grand Portage, were always regaled with plenty, and feasted on bread and pork—an unusual diet—and a *coup* to make them merry. There were usually about six to eight hundred men on the ground.

We regaled generally about a couple of weeks, then refitted, made up the crews and prepared to return each to our allotted department, under our appointed *Bourgeois* and clerk. We got safe to our winter quarters: Mr. Shaw to the new establishment, called " Fort George, " and Mr. James Finlay to *Fort de l'Isle.*

This season, I first met Mr. Hughes who was lately killed on the rail-road, near Lachine. He fortunately stopped with Mr. Finlay, and I was told off to winter at Fort George with Mr. Shaw.

While at breakfast, one morning in November, an express—two men mounted on the best of horses—came in from Mr. Finlay's, asking for assistance. A war had broken out between the Prairie Crees and the Mandanes on the Mississourie, and several had been killed on both sides. The Mississouri Indians, knowing that the Crees were in league with the whites on the Sascatchewan, determined war upon them also ; they killed an old man who had gone to the plains for his horses.

It was not known which particular band had committed the act, when a numerous band of those tribes came to Mr. Finlay's fort under pretence of trade. The fort being on an island, a boat was employed to cross them and all their effects, except their horses, which were left to the care of some boys. When all had crossed, they, as usual, walked into the fort, and, after trading the little they had, they began being insolent. It soon became evident that they intended to overpower and murder them and then pillage the goods. When, at last, they boasted of having killed Mr. Finlay's old man, and said they would pacify him with presents, Mr. Hughes, feeling enraged of their impudence, exclaimed : " Presents will not do. To arms, men ! " He seized his gun, the men followed his example, and the Indians, surprised of this sudden resolution, ran out of the house and, *pêle-mêle*, men and children swan across the river.

Thus Mr. Hughes, as brave a fellow as ever treaded the earth, saved Mr. Finlay, his men and property by his daring conduct.

As I have said, we were at breakfast when this express was brought to us at Fort George. Though young, I could not refrain my disgust at Mr. Finlay's conduct, who, after allowing such an insult with sixty good men under him, came entreating for more. Mr. Shaw felt a little angry with me ; Mr. Finlay being a partner, he thought a boy like me should not take such liberties. He said " You say too much, my young man ; prepare

" yourself to be off with that express in two days." No appeal from this ! On the third day we left on horse back, badly clothed and rigged out for the cold days of November, and only one blanket under our saddle.

In the mean time, Mr. Shaw got information that a new party had got to the lower parts of the Sascatchewan from Montreal, in opposition to the North-West Company. This made him change his instructions to me. I was first to proceed to Mr. Finlay's and then go to Sturgeon River, in the lower parts, where the opposition had stopped to winter with a band of Indians, get a few men and an assistant or interpreter at the nearest settlement, erect *chantiers* and oppose the opposition with all my might and with as little expense as possible.

The nearest post was about sixty miles up the Bow River or south branch of the Saskatchewan, and then under the charge of a clerk, a clever man, but a little too fond of the glass. From this gentlemen I obtained a good and faithful interpreter and ten men, with the necessary tools, goods, &c.

But I ought to have mentioned that we had, my two men and myself, a distance of about three hundred miles to travel on horse back to get to the settlement mentioned, which we accomplished in six days. (?) We had bad weather most of the way, which was after all fortunate for us, for during a snow storm, while gaining a distant hummock of wood in the middle of the prairies, we fell upon a dog, fresh killed with an arrow, a sure indication that a party of the enemy were still hovering about. The snow storm prevented our being seen, and we got safe at our destination.

We put up the *chantiers*, stores, &c., and passed the winter in broils with my opponent, who was an old experienced trader, Mr. David Grant.

It may not be out of the way to mention that on New Year's day, during the customary firing of musketry, one of our opponent's bullies purposely fired his powder through my window. I, of course, got enraged and challenged him to single combat with our guns; this was a check upon him ever after.

....

....

....

I think I remained this summer also with Mr. Hughes. The settlement upon Bow River having been attacked by the Missisouri Indians, they killed all the men and pillaged all the goods in the Hudson's Bay fort, excepting one person, a clerk who hid himself in the cellar amongst some rubbish, and then attacked our fort. They were beaten off and several killed. Our fort was in charge of one Jaccot Finlay, an Indian half brother of Mr. James Finlay, a man of courage. He had also an Indian chief of the Cree tribe, called "*Beau Parleur*," in the fort, and a fine speaker he certainly was.. **1796.**

On Mr. Shaw's return we had every thing in high order. Mr. Duncan McGillivray came with Mr. Shaw; he was brother to Mr. McGillivray and to Mrs. Reid, widow of the late Chief Justice of Montreal, and still alive (1859) in Montreal, at Park House, with Hugh Taylor, Esq..

....

Buffaloes were scarce this season near the Post and more so in spring. In consequence, as soon as the canoes were ready, they were sent off with part of the men to live upon their hunt along the river in twos and threes.. **1797.** Scarcity of food.

....

1798. ....

Establishment of Fort Augustus.

It having been found that the Indians' hunting grounds were getting too distant, and also that one establishment was not enough for the many tribes who met there and sometimes quarrelled, Mr. Hughes was ordered about 200 miles further up the river to commence another fort or settlement, which we named "Fort Augustus" (1), and to make as much progress as possible during the summer, so that Mr. Shaw might find a house, and store for his goods on his return.

Mr. Hughes and myself passed the summer at our respective posts, with about six men each. I made a few excursions to the hunters' tents, and became a good buffaloe hunter, particularly in the saddle, and I had a couple of swift horses for that purpose.

It was usual to send good horses to the lower part of the river where commenced the prairies, and there await the canoes, in order to follow the brigade on their way up, to provide them with provisions. The partners and clerks rode for this purpose with the hunters. Riding a swift horse in the fine valley of the Sascatchewan, abounding with buffaloes, deer and game of all sorts, was, we thought, the most pleasent part of our lives: we rode all day, following the progress of the brigade against a current of four knots.

Mr. Shaw being daily expected, I rode to try and meet him, which I did after a ride of about twenty miles; the men led fresh horses for Mr. Shaw and for Mr. McGillivray..................

I was ordered to join Mr. Hughes at Fort Augustus, with a complement of men and goods for the trade........................

We had here, (beside the Hudson's Bay Company, whose fort was within a musket shot of ours), the opposition, on the other side of us, of the new concern I have already mentioned, which

(1) Edmonton.

had assumed a powerful shape under the name of " X Y Co," at the head of which was the late John Ogilvy, in Montreal, and at this establishment, a Mr. King, an old South Trader in his prime and pride as the first among bullies.................................

This summer, as I have said, I passed at Fort George. I had with me a young Canadian gentleman, from Berthier, Mr. Ducoigne, a clever young man... 1799.

....

I had now become a partner and more mature in years......... About this time, Mr. Shaw left the country and retired to Montreal as an additional agent.......... .... 1800.

I remained to pass the summer with Decoigne at Fort Augustus, and Mr. McGillivray left for Kaministiquia. He had decided that we should abandon Fort George and build about twenty miles further up, on a pretty island, to be safer from enemies. 1801. *Fort de l'Isle.*

Mr. Decoigne consequently made some progress in building, and when Messrs. McGillivray and Hughes returned they found stores ready for the goods ; the men had to put up their own houses, six to a mess.............................. ....

....

Mr. Duncan McGillivray being unwell left the country for Montreal, and there died after two or three years ; as fine a fellow as ever lived. 1802.

A Mr. Cuthbert Grant, a middle aged man, was sent in his place.. He was a good man,

but not active enough for such a department. He saw that, and told me to act as I thought proper. I stayed at *Fort de l'Isle* and he proceeded to Fort Augustus,and wintered there with Mr. Hughes.

....

Spring came on and, Mr. Grant feeling quite ill, I had to fit him out a comfortable awning in one of the boats to take him down the river to Cumberland House.......................... We got Mr. Grant to Kaministiquia where he soon died (1). Mr. Grant recommended me to replace him. A Mr. Belleau, one of the most powerful men I ever met with, was sent with me as an assistant this year, as the department was noted for its unmanageable and unruly men.

I took my departure thus as master of the largest department in the North with a brigade of twelve large canoes,—fine but turbulent crews..........Some way or other, an arrangement was made, and the North-West Company bought up the X Y Company and Mr. King became one of my clerks. (2) He was now with me on the island. We had also a clerk, Mr. Rowan, son of old Dr. Rowan of Montreal and father to the present Doctor Rowan of Quebec notoriety, a fine resolute fellow who died in the Sascatchewan two or three years ago (3).

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(1) This does not agree with the following note made by the Hon : R. McKenzie in his " Reminiscences, " when speaking of a letter he had received from Mr. A. MacKenzie,—Sir Alexander MacKenzie—dated 2nd August 1799. " This letter breathes of irritation towards his co-agents ; their engagements as such are on the eve of expiring and, I fear, of finishing without a renewal. Besides, mention is made of Mr. Cuthbert Grant's will. He died this year, 1799, and made Sir Alexander McKenzie his executor. " Mr. McDonald has evidently got confused in his dates, as he himself admits further on.

(2) This transaction can only have been a partial sale of the interests of the X Y Company in that quarter, as Mr. McDonald, a few lines further, speaks of the strenuous opposition which was made to him by that company. It was, more probably, only a re-engagement of Mr. King under the banners of his old opponents. The coalition of the two companies took place only after Mr. Simon McTavish's death, in 1804.

(3) Doctor Rowand of Quebec was born at Fort Edmonton on the Saskatchewan. His father sent him to Lachine to begin his education, then to Edinburgh, where he

We had now a strong, fresh opposition, with Sir Alexander MacKenzie at their head, from Forsyth, Richardson and Company. A Mr. de Rocheblave for the new Company, a gentleman of family, on one side and the Hudson Bay Fort on the other ; I was thus placed between two fires. 1802 should

.... Death of Mr. King.

During the winter, a messenger came from some Indians who were encamped two days journey from here, asking to send for the furs they had, in order to pay their debts. I ordered Mr. King to get ready and to set off next morning with a couple of men and as many dog sleighs. That morning we were taking tea at the Hudson's Bay House The master, Mr. Hallet, said to King : " Take care, King, of Mr. La Mothe, "—Mr. de Rocheblave's clerk, who also was going to the camp,—" he will shoot you. " " Ha ! ha ! " said King, laughing, " to be shot by La Mothe would be a good joke, indeed ! " Next morning he set off, a dashing fellow, in high glee and was to be absent three nights.

The second night, Mr. King's wife and a child—a daughter about six years old—were in bed with a clear rousing fire of blazing wood. The little girl awoke her mother saying : " Mother, there is my father at the foot of the bed, his neck all red. " The mother told her : " Don't you, fool ; lie down." She did so, and awoke a second time in the same manner, but finally slept. Next morning, I saw Mrs. King who told me all this, and

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graduated, and to London and Paris, where he spent several years perfecting himself in his profession. He was attached to Sir George Simpson's celebrated expedition around the world, in 1841 and 1842, during which he took voluminous and interesting notes which were published at the time.

Doctor Rowand settled in Quebec in 1847, and soon acquired a most prominent position among the members of his profession, and endeared himself to the public generally by his remarkably kind and sympathetic disposition towards the poor and suffering. He died in February 1889. leaving a widow—Miss Margaret Kincaird, of Edinburgh,—two sons and four daughters.

also to all others, but no notice was taken of it. What was our astonishment, next day, to see poor King brought home a corpse on one of the sleighs.

It appears that some dispute had arisen between King and LaMothe about some furs and, as the latter said, he shot King in self defence......... The shot was in the neck and his neck was all red as the little girl had described it.

I buried King with military honors; LaMothe came down to Montreal and was allowed to live. He was of a respectable family and escaped (1).

This caused no friendhip towards Mr. de Rocheblave, tho' perfectly innocent of any premeditation against King.

....

Spring came on and we prepared to be off, and arrived in due time to Fort William. Mr. Hughes remained behind, and Mr. David Thompson, an astronomer who had come to the department, had orders to go on a trip of discovery towards the Rocky Mountains, and across the mountains if he could.

1803. Rocky Mountain House.

I returned from Fort William in due time with the brigade, and found all right, and I determined to build further up towards the Rocky Mountains in order to try and meet a new tribe of Natives, the Coutenais (2). But I find that I am a twelve

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(1) See Lord Selkirk's Sketch of the British fur Trade in North America. LaMothe was evidently acting in self defence against a much stronger man and a desperate character, as Mr. McDonald himself has already stated. This occurred in 1801.

(2) At the forks of the North Saskatchewan and Clearwater rivers.

Several other trading stations have held, at different times, the name of "Rocky Mountain House." There was a Rocky Mountain House near the head of the Peace River, in longitude 122°, which was also known as "Hudson's Hope."—See Mr. Tyrrell's Report, and Geo: Reports, 1886, "E", page 9. Jasper Haws' House—Jasper

months before my time. However incorrect I may as to time, circumstances are the same. This then ought to be 1802.

Mr. Thompson had not done as I expected. During the winter, I took three good men with dogs, &c. and went up the river myself, a journey of a week, going and returning, and found the gap in the mountain not to be exactly as Mr. Thompson represented it...

Took my departure early and mustered all my forces along the route at the different points. Many incidents occurred too long the relate, many buffaloes and deers killed, many bears seen, &c. This brings to my memory an incident which took place near the Rocky Mountain House.. **1803.**

....

Got to Fort William all safe. Refitted the brigade, sent it off and Mr. Daniel McKenzie was appointed in my place to act in concert with Mr. Hughes, while I myself took my departure for Montreal, after an absence of twelve or fifteen years. I got to Montreal in company with some other gentlemen, met a sister whom I had left in Edinburg in my aunt Spauldings' family and now

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House—at the sources of the Athabasca River, has also been called by the same name.

In 1800, Mr. John Thomson, a clerk in the North-West Company, who, two or three years later, became a Partner, established a trading post on the Mackenzie River "in full view of the Rocky Mountains at whose smallness I was greatly surprised" and called it "Rocky Mountain Fort." It was soon after abandoned and, in 1805, Mr. Alexander MacKenzie, the Partner in charge of the Great Bear Lake Department, already calls it "Old Rocky Mountain House." It was then going to ruin.

In 1798, the same Mr. Thomson, then acting under Mr. James McKenzie, who was in charge of the Athabasca Department, established a fort at the entrance of the Little Red River into the Peace river—a house 28 x 24 ! — which he called *Fort de la Rivière Rouge, ou Grand Marais*, probably because the bed of Peace River at and below the mouth of the Little Red River was formed of low muddy islands. See Geo : Reports, 1875, page 162. Little Red River Fort.

married to the Hon. Colonel McGillivray. We were now entire strangers to one another, civilized manners were entirely strange to me.

I stayed in Montreal at my sister's two or three weeks, and left for my native country, intending at first to land on my native soil. I left for New-York by Lake Champlain, where we found a solitary schooner bound for Whitehall, on board of which I took passage at the tune of $35.00. There, fearing the yellow fever was raging in New-York, I determined to steer for Boston.

I visited Salem, some twelve miles off, where I saw a painting of the attack of Bunker Hill. A mounted officer appeared leading the attack at the head of his regiment, the 84th ; I was told it was General Small, then colonel of that regiment. A Mr. McLeod who travelled with me turned around and said that officer was my uncle ; some Americans were present and the consequence was an invitation to dinner.

I remained in Boston a month,—as no vessel sailed during that time for Great Britain, then at war with France,—feasted by its kind people, Colonel Parkins in particular, whom I met in his travels in Canada and who was all attention to me. At last, the "John Adams" sailed and in her I got safe into the Mersey, she being an American vessel.

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1804. It was decided in Council that I was to take the English River department in the place of Donald McTavish, who left in his turn for Montreal Mr. McKenzie (Daniel) did not do as coadjutor to Mr. Hughes ; he was appointed some where else, and Mr. John McDonald took his place. I, consequently, began to refit my men with Mr. Campbell, a partner junior to myself, who had been some years in the department.

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Mr. Campbell remained at *Lac La Rouge*, about half way up English River, and I left for *Isle-à-la-Crosse*, where I passed the winter. The Hudson's Bay Company had an establishment here also ; we passed a quiet winter. We had a post also at Green Lake under Mr. Colin Robertson, who afterwards behaved somewhat amiss. I discharged him, and he joined Lord Selkirk's party.

.... **1805.**

It was ordered in our Council that I should return to my old station on the Saskatchewan (1) with Mr. Hughes. Although a very dangerous department I preferred it. I assisted Mr. Hughes to get all ready and we left Fort William with our fine but turbulent crew. I determined, in council with Mr. Hughes, that I should take four canoes and about twenty-five men and go up as far as I could to take up my quarters on the Bow River, to explore the country and trade with the Blackfeet and Missisouri Indians.

In going up and rounding a point in the river, I came upon a war party of the Plain Crees, faces all black ; they had seen the canoes at a distance, and waited for us. I did not hesitate to jump amongst them, and, after some parley, I gave them a bit of tobacco, a glass of liquor and left them..................................

We continued ascending the river, which is nearly equal in size to the other branch. We passed where the Indians had destroyed the Hudson Bay Company's fort some years before, as stated, and came to the Grand Prairies, in some parts abounding in all kinds of animals. There is a remarkable place called *Bois d'Orignal*. I never met with a more beautiful spot : there- *Bois d'Orignal.*

(1) About sixty miles up the south branch of the Saskatchewan.

is a small river from the southward. It is a favorite encampment for the Indians.

There is an elbow in the river parallel to that on the north branch ; a most beautiful place. I crossed the neck of land, perhaps ten miles, with my interpreter, while the canoes, always in sight, had to go around ten miles at least. While laying down on the grass waiting for the brigade a stately buck elk passed by us ; the prairie being undulating we did not see one another until he was upon us. It being the rutting season, he gave a loud call which startled us ; we turned around and shot him. The loud call is for the does, which they answer with a kind of whistle.

We kept on for four days against a four knots current. Almost run over by the buffaloes at our campment. This is their rutting season also, and coming down like an avalanche, those behind pushed the others down the banks. We were obliged to keep on larges fires and fire guns to keep them off. They came some times a few yards from our tents or canoes............

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Chesterfield House.

We at last found a low point of wood fit for erecting stockades and houses, and I determined to make that the end of my journey. It was at what is called New Chesterfield House, (1) where

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(1) Chesterfield House was at the mouth of the Red Deer River, on the South Saskatchewan, and at a considerable distance below what is known to-day as "Bow River."

It would appear that the whole course of the Saskatchewan River was, at that time, indifferently called *Rivière des Arcs*—Bow River—and *La Fourche des Gros Ventres*. If so, it becomes doubtful whether the circular letter from Mr. Wm. McGillivray mentioned in the foot note of page 79 of the "*Esquisse Historique*" which prefaces the first series of these documents, refers to the "Old Bow Fort" above Calgary. That letter, dated the 25th July, 1804, from Kamanistiquia, contains the following : "We have no reasonable cause to apprehend a scarcity of provisions next year, both from the ample supply of goods sent to the River Opas and R River and the establishment of the Bow River."

"Old Bow Fort" must have been built at a later period, as the trading post mentioned by Mr. McDonald appears to have been the most distant one then established by the

a detachment of the Hudson's Bay people soon joined us in order to get a share of the furs and provisions.

The Blackfeet roaming tribe found us out in a couple of weeks and encamped with us to the number of sixty tents which in a short time accumulated to one hundred. We had pickets and houses up in less than a month.

I had a very large military marquise with ropes extending around it in which I received the chiefs, who had never seen anything like it. I entertained them in it some times upon beef-steak and tea, &c., which they called " medecine water. "

About Christmas a horseman was seen by the watch coming at full speed. He was superbly mounted and finely dressed in clean new deer skin, ornamented with porcupine quills; a very handsome man and a perfect rider. In an instant, he was off his horse, which hegave to one of the men standing by idle, and entered my marquise. An Indian battle.

He in substance said : " I am of the Missisourie Indians ; we " have made peace with the whites, but we are at war with the " Blackfeet ; they surround you, and are also your friends. I " come from a small band, we are but few, but if you receive " us as friends, we will fight our way in, and trade or fall." I gave him some pieces of tobacco, smoked a pipe with him and told him we had nothing to do with their quarrel ; that our chief object was trade and to bring all Indians their necessaries. With this he mounted his fiery steed and made off at full speed.

The Blackfeet Camp of about five hundred warriors was within a mile ; some young men who were always upon the look out

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North-West Company on that communication. Mr. McGillivray must have referred to some establishment on the South Saskatchewan proper, also called " Bow River."

Chesterfield House was re-established in 1822 by Mr. Donald McKenzie, but had to be abandonned a few years afterwards on account of the unfriendly dispositions of the Natives, who murdered several of the traders.

(scouts), saw all this and reported it in the camp. We expected the strangers next day, when, about noon, volleys of musketry and then a call for more ammunition from the Blackfeet indicated that a battle was going on. I at once determined to ride out and try to quell the disturbance ; it was an imprudent act from which I was dissuaded by my men. The battle continued till dark, when the sound of fire arms ceased. Scouts soon came in and reported that the Mississouri Indians were surrounded and that in the morning the Blackfeet would kill them all. Several of the latter were brought in killed and wounded.

The result of the battle was that while the Blackfeet thought their prey secure, the latter quietly made their escape, and when the day came, the Blackfeet found an empty camp with only a few furs and provisions for booty. The fugitives carried away their wounded and also their dead, so that their scalps might not adorn the triumph of their victors. The Blackfeet, however, pursued them next morning and made them drop their dead and wounded, and more were killed on both sides.

The dead men were taken in and the men were called to dig graves, as they had spades, &c. On this, a large procession took place; the near relatives, men and women, pierced their own flesh with arrows, and a mournful song was kept on which had a most depressing effect on us.

Indian credulity.

The winter passed on, and we got ready early for our return. I was anxious to get all the Indians away, that they should not see us taking away our remaining property, particularly tobacco, ammunition, liquor, &c., &c. My interpreter was an ingenious fellow ; he secretly made a large kite, and one clear night, only a few young Indians being inside, he let it off. The young Indians, of course, where brought out to see the sight. It hovered above us for a little time, then disappeared and was destroyed. They had never seen any thing of the kind, and next morning gave the alarm in the camp.

The principal chiefs where ordered in my hall, when the interpreter showed them a pretended letter with some marks upon it, and told then it was from the Master of Life ordering them off in three days to a stated point, and bidding them not to return for several days, else they should meet a numerous army of Crees and Assiniboils who were in search of them.

In five days we were gone and saw no more of them ; we got safe off with all we had, but at night kept watch for fear of treachery. We found buffaloes and consequently had plenty, so we merely floated down, as we were before our time. The Hudson's Bay people, benefitting by our strategy, kept close to us, but they were safer as they had large barges anchored out in the river at night.

We were drawing near *Bois d'Orignal*, where the Indians I had seen when coming up had appointed to meet me, and from whom I expected furs. I kept this secret from the Hudson's Bay people as well as from my own men for fear of indiscretion. I called my guide and principal man and told him :—" Bouché, it is my " intention to be off before day ; we are now out of all danger ; " you are in plenty, so you will remain for a certain time. Take " as much buffalo fresh meat as you can. " I told him the day he should leave and when he would be expected at the next fort.

The expedition attacked. 1804.

Death of Boucher.

He found it all right, poor fellow ! and pitched his tent where I had had mine. A buffalo path led the way from the prairie to the water and a small tuft of wood on each side, a beautiful spot. The boats were at anchor with their lading and the canoes were drawn upon the beach, the men, as usual, sleeping under them. Thus all was right.

The banks were high but sloping. One of the men came to Bouché and told him he had gone to the top of the bank and had seen something at a distance, but could not make out whether it was a band of elks or horses and riders, but that he

was inclined to think that it was the latter, and advised Bouché to leave the place.

Bouché, a fine, faithful and trusty man, who had left his family the year before, intending to return in three years, replied :—" No, my orders are to stay here ; the time will be out " to-morrow morning and then we shall all leave this; all is " ready as ordered."

That night they were attacked at day break, a volley was fired in Bouché's tent, where three men were in bed asleep, and all of them were killed.

This volley aroused the whole camp ; those in the boats at anchor were able to defend themselves and return the shots ; those under the canoes got them in the water and lost two men, but the firing from the boats drove off the Indians. The brigade went on and arrived at *Bois d'Orignal.* The Crees went in pursuit but all were miles off by that time. (1) I had in the mean time gone on as I have said. I met the band of Crees at Bois d'Orignal, got what they had and left for the next settlement.

The brigade came to the settlement and gave this disagreable intelligence. If I had stayed I would have fallen where Bouché lay. Thus Providence again preserved me ;—so often and so often.—We made our way to Cumberland and, in a few days, were joined by Hughes and his brigade, and all got safe at Kaministiquia, where we met our friends, refitted and reformed our crews.

Being in want of good men, I was requested to take a well manned canoe of fourteen hands, and, with Mr. Donald McIntosh,

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(1) This is, most probably, the attack upon the whites referred to by Mr. Charles McKenzie in his second expedition to the Missouri ; see 1st series. Mr. MacDonald makes a mistake of one year and refers to what took place in 1804, as may be seen a little further on when he speaks of Mr. de Rocheblave as being in opposition to him, which could not have been in 1805 as the two North-West Companies reunited in 1804.

—a stout strong man, now no more,—to pay a visit to Old Grand Portage, about forty miles distant, in order to try and get some hands who might be induced to leave Forsyth, Richardson & Co and enter our service, Sir Alexander MacKenzie acting then as head of that concern.—We still had a clerk there with two or three men, as a mere Indian trading post.—We soon got there at the rate of eight miles an hour on the smooth surface of Lake Superior..

I resumed assistance to Mr. Hughes, got ready, sent off our brigade and followed them after a few days. We got safe to the old Saskatchewan, where we passed the winter in strong opposition. I remained at the Island Fort, Mr. Hughes at Fort Augustus and Mr. Thompson at Rocky Mountain House. I however went by land to Rocky Mountain House, and saw the arrival of part of the brigade with the necessary goods, and rode back to Fort Augustus, and then to my island winter quarters, having Mr. de Rocheblave on one side and Mr. Halcro on the other in strong opposition...
....

....(2) **1806.**

.... **1807.**

It was decided in council at Fort William, that I should take charge of Red River Department, my namesake, Big McDonell retiring,—a most powerful man who, however, did not command his men as he ought, an easy man of no exertion.

This being a nigh department, with a set of the worst men in the employ,—having less distance to go and more time to perform

(2) He goes to Montreal, on the sick list.

the distance,—I did not like it much, tho' it suited my state of health better.

I found that many abuses existed ; I began a reformation which at first displeased the men, but finally they found it better. I had a very able assistant, Mr. Alex. McDonell, afterwards Sheriff of Ottawa district ; we made very useful reforms and abolished many abuses. I had one or two other very good assistants. A Clerk at *Rivière la Souris*, one Falcon, died in the course of the winter.

Fort Gibraltar established. I established a fort at the junction of the Red and Assiniboil rivers, and called it " Gibraltar ", though there was not a rock or stone within three miles. I wintered at River *qui appelle* afterwards, where Big McDonell,—McDonell, Point Fortune, Ottawa,—had made his station several years. The men all knew me by sight and so did many of the Indians..................

....

1808. Refitted and prepared to return to Red River or rather Assiniboil. Both are insignificant compared to the rivers Winnipeg and Sascatchewan ; however, in high water, both may be navigable for steamboats. " *Qui vivra voira.*"

I formed an establishment further up the *Qui appelle*, at a beautiful small lake, in order to be nearer to the buffalo and the provision making Indians, and passed the winter there with Alex. McDonell ; he was only a clerk as yet..........................

....

Attacked by Indians. Spring came on and we prepared for our departure, intending to leave six men in charge of the fort all summer. The boats being ready and loaded, the brigade was sent off and I intended following two days after on horse back, through the plains, with Mr. Alexander McDonell. The river is small and meandering, but the water was high from the flood or melting of the snow.

In about an hour, an alarm was given that the boats had been attacked and all the men killed. I immediately sent for a horse, and, leaving Mr. McDonell in charge, I mounted, and soon met our cooper with an arrow in his cheek, and soon after two or three others. On arriving at the place where the boats were landed, I found some of the men scattered about, some wounded. I mustered all I could and, with the men sent by Mr. McDonell, crossed to the south side, the principal place of attack, and there found in one of the boats a woman, the wife of one of the men, who had himself received an arrow in the belly, but had escaped. This poor woman had been ravished, then scalped and left for dead on the shore; she had managed to crawl on board and hide herself under the covering.................... ....

We collected the boats and the men remaining, and found three dead and as many wounded. It was now late, and we had to guard the property all night.

We started again on the third day leaving no one behind, and placed myself in the first boat, Alexander with a couple of half breeds riding along the shore and flanking us as it were. We got safe that night at the junction of the *Qui appelle* with the Assiniboil river, the poor woman and the wounded men moaning all night.

Next day, we descended a rapid stream—four knots—and reached River *La Souris*, where we learned that several war parties had been seen. Mr. Pritchard was there in command in the place of the late Mr. Falcon. We there left the wounded and started for Fort William.

M. David Thompson rescued.

At Fort William, we learned by the winter express that Mr. D. Thompson, who had been across the mountains to explore the country and trade with the Snake Indians, was surrounded by Blackfeet war parties, and that he could not return as expected with his furs and for a fresh supply of goods. I offered

to go to his rescue; my offer was accepted, and full power given me to pick the best men willing to go with me.

I soon made up a crew of thirty chosen men, and Mr. J. George McTavish—who afterwards made the arrangement with Mr. Astor's party, at Astoria—and a Mr. McMillen, a steady Scotchman. We got ready as soon as possible, lightly laden, with a bold guide, Joseph Paul, an old bully......................

As we had far to go, and as time was pressing, I immediately sent off the old guide and one man with directions to proceed to *Fort de l'Isle*, there to get fresh horses to Fort Augustus, and other fresh horses to Rocky Mountain House, where he was to take a hunter, three more men, bark and other materials for the making of a couple of canoes, and proceed across the mountains by the route Mr. Thompson took, and then on the sources of River Columbia or Oregon, and have the canoes ready by the time I got there with the goods.

This was done accordingly. In the mean time, I proceeded with the brigade, accompanied by Mr. McTavish and McMillen; we were as hunters following on the prairie. We got on progressing well and got to Rocky Mountain House, where I took about thirty horses, all I could find, and sent them light by land to the sources of the Saskatchewan, where I was to leave the canoes and take the goods, &c. on horses to where I directed the guide to build canoes; I prefered taking horse myself.

It was all ups and downs, strong woods and rocks, and the route was merely an animal pathway to be followed by guess. The canoes went on with pole against a swift current and rapids running six knots.

After much labour by flood and fields we got to the first ridge of mountains. Beyond this we found a flat perhaps twenty miles broad, smooth current if I remember well. A beautiful up hill and down dale of prairies in which we saw several "big

horns" or mountain sheep, but too wild to get a shot at. We then came by a more stiff current to the Coutenais plains, so called from its being the resort of that tribe some years past.

We continued on in this beautiful plain, surrounded with perpendicular rocks many hundred feet high, and sighted several of the goat species, which we called the *Chamois* of the Rocky Mountains. We got now into very shallow and rocky currents near the canoe end of our journey, the crew on water, Mr. McTavish, three or four men and myself in charge of the horses.

As we rode along in advance and expecting to get a shot at something, I saw the form of a hat among the brushes a head, and found out it was my guide, whom I had sent in advance to prepare canoes, returning on foot with his men. He told me that, while at work, a party of about sixty Blackfeet came upon them, pillaged all they had and took their horses, arms and all; even their hunters ran from them. They thought it was useless for them to remain and they feared being murdered.

A halt was made; my companions thought that we should return to Rocky Mountain House full tilt, canoes and all, I thought otherwise. The brigade of five canoes came up and added to the story that they had seen two Indians amongst the rocks, probably the spies of the band. I immediately ordered to encamp and we kept watch all night while Mr. McMillen and myself—McTavish was too much afraid—with the hunter and two others, took horses and scoured the plains for a few miles until night fall..

Nothing now remained but to lay the canoes up for the winter in some secure spot amongst the pine groves. On the second day we mounted or walked on. I brought up the rear and the guide, a heavy man, led the van on foot with all the men, the horses all laden with the goods, provisions, &c. We formed a very respectable caravan; the men knew the old guide Paul to

be an old veteran, " first water " and, I beleive, they had no less confidence in myself.

We soon got into the defilés of the mountains and crossed the ridge which divides the waters flowing into the Pacific from those flowing into the Atlantic. We found a great change in the weather ; we had half a foot of snow on the east side while on the west side we had verdure. We came to a river, with a current of perhaps four knots, flowing and meandering through a fine broad gravelly beach for a distance of about twenty miles. Here, there must be gold, to a certainty.

After travelling two days, we arrived at the spot where the party had been pillaged. They did not happen to destroy the materials and we began canoe making, to ascend and not to descend.

In five or six days we had canoes ready. The horses were sent through the woods to where they could pasture. In ascending, one of the canoes upset in the current, we lost a *róle* of tobacco and a bag of balls, 90 lbs each.

My object was not to descend the river, which took an entirely northerly direction around a very high mountain which lay west of us. My business was to ascend and go south in the direction of the Snake county, where Mr. Thompson himself on Snake River.

Had I known how the country was, I would not have lost any time in making canoes, but gone on as we were with the horses. I sent back to the Rocky Mountain House most of them, retaining about twelve with which we proceeded. We were soon out of provisions, and, after travelling for three days, on the third morning we got a small deer which served only as one supper, but we knew we could not starve as we had the horses.

Next day we got into prairie ground, and soon got to a fine little lake about six miles long and one wide. Here I deter-

mined to winter with a part of the men, knowing that the Coutenais tribe would soon find us out, this being their country. Mr. McTavish went on and, next day, came upon the Coutenais camp where all was made clear. Guides were sent with Mr. McTavish to Mr. Thompson and the band came to me as it was a safeguard, and supplying me with the meat of the fallow deer all winter, hunting, dancing, singing and gambling, night and day.

This ended 1808. I here find that I have been blending two seasons into one. Leaving the Coutenais country in spring, 1810 I returned across the mountains with three or four men and by hook and crook got to Rocky Mountain House, leaving Mr. Thompson, coast clear, to follow with Mr. McTavish, Mr. McMillan remaining on Snake River (1)......................................

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(1) The following letter from Mr. D. Thompson to Mr. Alex : Fraser, of *Rivière du Loup*, is not without interest, as it gives an idea of the risks and sufferings this distinguished geographer had to undergo during his many years of explorations in the North-West and in the Rocky Mountains. The original is in the possession of Mr. Alphonse Pouliot, advocate and Professor of Laval University, in Quebec.

21 Dec. 1810, Athabaska River,
foot of the Mountains.

My Dear Fraser,

I received your esteemed favour the 9th Sept. and am obliged to you for the traits of civilized life and the information of my daughter. She costs me 62 £ 10 s. at present, and I think 50£ a year would do her all the good that the present sum costs me. It is my wish to give all my children an equal and good education ; my conscience obliges me to it, and it is for this I am now working in this country.

I intended to have paid you a visit at Montreal this last summer, but the critical situation of our affairs in the Columbia obliged me to return. The Americans, it seems, were as usual determined to be before hand with us in the Columbia in ship navigation. As the Peagans killed an officer and 8 soldiers out of a tribe of 12 do (?), if this accident has not drove them back, they will probably get the start of me.

My canoes were also drove back by the Peagans, but no lives or property lost and I have changed our route from to the Athabasca River and am now preparing in this hard season to cross the mountains and gain my first post near the head of

1812. I had not been long at Fort William, when Colonel Wm: McKay came " express " to inform us that war had been declared by the United States against Great Britain. This was alarming, as all our furs might be taken on the route to Montreal. I had in the mean time determined to leave the country, at least visit London.

We left Fort William in the schooner Beaver, as many as she could hold, to re-enforce the small garrison of St. Joseph, which was held by some old veterans under Captain Roberts. We found on getting there that this officer, on receiving the news of the declaration of war, had resolved, with his few regulars and as many *voyageurs* and Indians as he could collect, to surprise the garrison of Makinac, which he effectually did. We went there next day and found the place in Captain Roberts' possession, the American garrison prisoners of war, and a great many Indians dancing their war dances, &c.

We remained a few days and left for Montreal......................

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the Mississourie, a march of about 34 days, and a part of it over a dangerous country for war. I hope good Providence will take care of us and bring me safe back again.

I am always in such distant expeditions that I cannot write my friends regularly. They think I slight them, but they are mistaken. It is my situation that prevents me and not negligence. I shall, after this apology, be glad to correspond with you as usual, if you have time to spare.

If all goes well and it pleases good Providence to take care of me, I hope to see you and a civilized world in the autumn of 1812. I am getting tired of such constant hard journeys; for the last 20 months I have spent only bare two months under the shelter of a hut, all the rest has been in my tent, and there is little likelihood the next 12 months will be much otherwise.

I hope you are better at your ease and that you now enjoy that society you merit, tho' I suppose you now and then cast a thought to your old friends the Chipewyans who still talk of you.

Your humble servant,
David Thompson.

Mr. Alexander Fraser,
Montreal.

I left Quebec in the " Isaac Todd, " fur ship. with a valuable cargo, under convoy with the fall fleet numbering about forty sails, from Bique. The Isaac Todd mounted ten guns, and had a letter of marque. She sailed pretty well, being laden with light furs. We dispersed in a gale and got alone in the Mersey, from whence I took a *chaise* to London, in company with three invalided officers from Spain...

....

It had been decided in council at Fort William that the Company should send the Isaac Todd to the Columbia River, where the Americans had established Astoria,—so named after Mr. John Jacob Astor,—and that, in the mean time, a party should proceed from Fort William to meet the ship on the coast, war having been declared. This party consisted of Mr. John George McTavish and Mr. Alexander Henry, partners, with instructions to settle trading posts in different parts across the mountains, and then proceed to Astoria. **Expedition by sea to Astoria.**

The Isaac Todd was fitted out by the House of Fraser, McGillivray & Co, Suffolk Lane, Mr. Simon McGillivray being the principal agent ; Mr. Donald McTavish, a proprietor of the North-West Company and myself, were requested to go in that vessel as part owners and supercargos, to which we assented.

We left London in the latter end of February 1813, in company with the Honorable Edward Ellice of London, for Portsmouth, where the vessel lay under command of Captain Smith who had commanded her from Quebec, and was supposed to be a fine brave fellow. Never were people more mistaken as I found out ere long ; a mere empty braggart, but a rather good sailor. **1813.**

The Isaac Todd was a twenty gun letter of marque with as mongrel a crew as ever was on board a ship. It would have been better if she had had only six guns well managed, then

she might have sailed better. We had on board cannon balls enough for a line of battle ship. She proved to be a miserable sailor, with a miserable commander, a rascally crew and three mates, called first, second, third officers. We had on board half a dozen good Canadian *Voyageurs*, with a Sandwich Islander and four clerks : the *voyageurs* to make and man a canoe, the Islander to guide us into the river Columbia, where he had been before.

The Canadians having been some time on board, they requested me to grant them leave to come on shore with the Islander and the clerks, the latter all Scotch. I gave them leave but with orders to be on board in time.

The *Voyageurs* in trouble.

Messrs. Ellice, McGillivray, McTavish and myself were dining at the principal hotel when the waiter came in and told us some men wished to see us. We knew immediately who they were and Mr. McTavish expressed the wish to go on board with them ; they accordingly all made for the wharf, where they found a couple of the Canadians waiting. They had all made a little free with wine and women, and took a shore boat.

They had not proceeded far when a press gang boarded them and were taking them all off to the hulk, an old 74, lying as a recruiting ship. Mr. McTavish made some resistance, saying they belonged to such and such a ship, for such and such a purpose, &c., and were all from Canada. But that would not do ; the midshipman took all except Mr. McTavish himself and one of the clerks, who returned to shore.

We were still at table when Mr. McTavish came in all in a fury, telling his story and blaming me for allowing the men to come ashore. Mr. Ellice winked at me and said : " Never mind. " He was brother-in-law to Earl Gray, and the Port Admiral was Earl Gray's brother.

Next morning at breakfast, Mr. Ellice handed me an order from the Admiral for the release of our men, upon which I

steered my course on board the hulk. The poor fellows had been put in close quarters all night for fear of escape. They were in a sad state of mind indeed, with the fear of being made sailors for the rest of their lives and of never seeing ther fatherland again.

I presented the order to the officer on deck ; he gave the necessary orders for their release, and I returned with them to the Isaac Todd, all safe after what they believed a narrow escape.

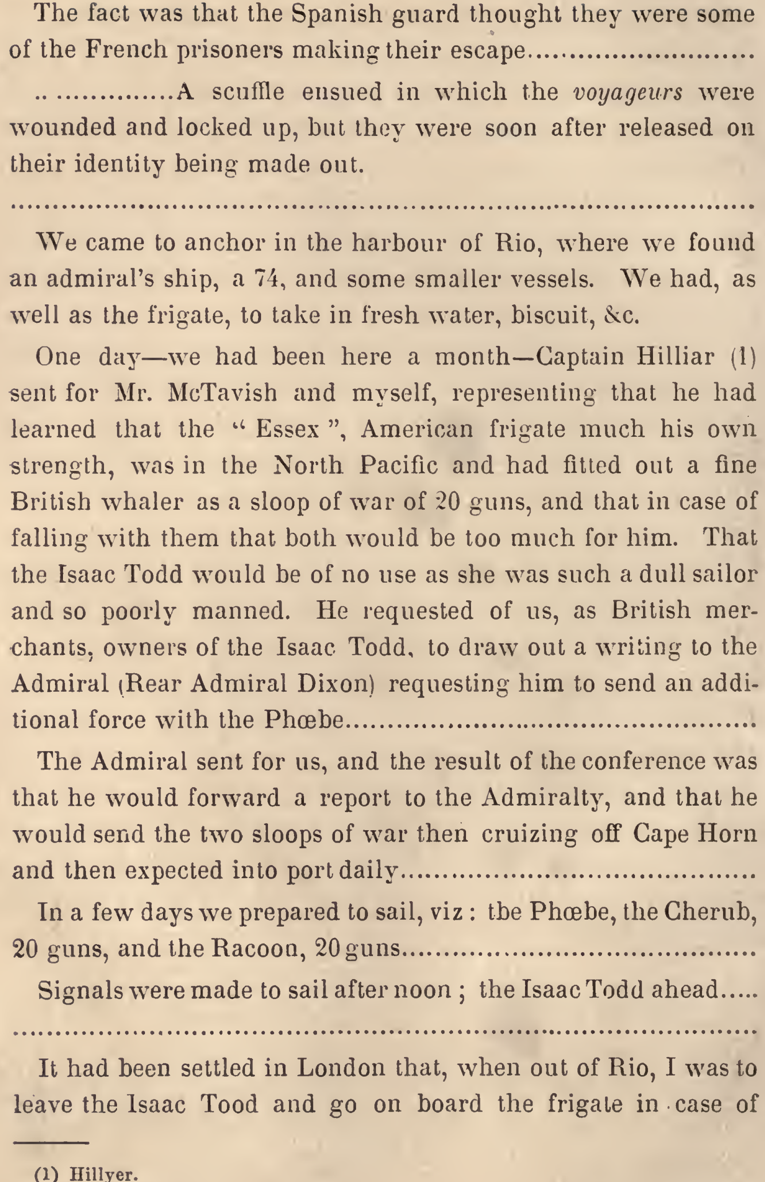
Application had been made in the course of the previous winter for a convoy ; it had been granted, and the Phœbe, frigate of 36 guns, got ready to accompany us, the commander having received sealed orders which were to be opened only on leaving Rio de Janeiro, where he had received orders to call for supplies, water, &c.

The orders, known to us, were that at Rio I was to leave the Isaac Todd and go on board the frigate with the Sandwich Islander and four of the Canadians in case of separation from the Isaac Todd, and, in case of not meeting the party from Fort William, I might try and proceed up the Columbia. This last idea was nonsense, as I never could have got up with so few men amongst so many hostile tribes.

We sailed at the latter end of March or February under convoy with a large fleet of at least forty sails bound for all parts of the world. I had three dogs of three different breeds for use in the Columbia...

....

One evening, while at *Sancta Crux*, Tenerif, I had hardly gone to bed, when Mr. McTavish, who had gone ashore, came rushing into my cabin, roaring out : " MacDonald, you allowed the Canadians to go ashore again ! they have had a dust with the Spanish guard and half of them are taken prisoners, and we will lose our men. "



The fact was that the Spanish guard thought they were some of the French prisoners making their escape..........................

.. ..A scuffle ensued in which the *voyageurs* were wounded and locked up, but they were soon after released on their identity being made out.

....

We came to anchor in the harbour of Rio, where we found an admiral's ship, a 74, and some smaller vessels. We had, as well as the frigate, to take in fresh water, biscuit, &c.

One day—we had been here a month—Captain Hilliar (1) sent for Mr. McTavish and myself, representing that he had learned that the " Essex ", American frigate much his own strength, was in the North Pacific and had fitted out a fine British whaler as a sloop of war of 20 guns, and that in case of falling with them that both would be too much for him. That the Isaac Todd would be of no use as she was such a dull sailor and so poorly manned. He requested of us, as British merchants, owners of the Isaac Todd, to draw out a writing to the Admiral (Rear Admiral Dixon) requesting him to send an additional force with the Phœbe...

The Admiral sent for us, and the result of the conference was that he would forward a report to the Admiralty, and that he would send the two sloops of war then cruizing off Cape Horn and then expected into port daily.......................................

In a few days we prepared to sail, viz : tbe Phœbe, the Cherub, 20 guns, and the Racoon, 20 guns.......................................

Signals were made to sail after noon ; the Isaac Todd ahead.....

....

It had been settled in London that, when out of Rio, I was to leave the Isaac Tood and go on board the frigate in case of

(1) Hillyer.

separation and take three or four Canadians with me with our necessaries.

When fairly out, Captain Hilliar sent a boat and I left the Isaac Todd without regret. The novelty of the thing and the hopes of meeting the Essex pleased me. I was well received on board by Captain Hilliar and officers, my cot strung amongst the guns, &c.

We had very rough weather off the Faulkland Islands, and were nearly six weeks before we could double Cape Horn, and were driven half way to the Cape of Good Hope. We lost sight of the Isaac Todd in a gale; our rendez-vous was Juan Fernandez. We at last doubled the Cape under top sails. It was winter there, the deck was one sheet of ice for six weeks and our sails one frozen sheet.

We turned our faces northward as if towards home and we made for Juan Fernandez, Robinson Crusoe's island, where we cast anchor. Shore boats came to us with junk beef and some milk tasting and smelling garlic: we did not like it. **Juan Fernandez.**

The next morning, about noon, the captains of the three ships, the purser and the doctor of the frigate and myself went ashore. We were met by two fat priests, who hugged and kissed us. This is a penal colony, with a jail which would not keep an Irishman twenty four hours.

We were conducted to Government House; we met His Excellency in the balcony. He hugged us as had done the priests and then we were ushered into a large hall, where we saw his lady, quite young and handsome—his second wife—and four beautiful daughters. His Excellency was himself a very fine man, six feet high. **Government House.**

They could speak neither English nor French and we could not speak Spanish, so that the conversation finished where it

began. We had to send for a sailor who spoke a little Spanish, and in the course of the conversation we learned that the Essex and her consort had lately left the main shore, Valparaiso, and had gone north. Our stay here was about one week, but no Isaac Todd!

Captain Hillhar having here perused some accounts of the entrance of the Columbia River, found that the bar was too shallow to admit his frigate. He, therefore, requested me to draw out a letter to him representing this, and giving it as my opinion that his only way was to put me on board of one of the sloops of war, and to detach that sloop to the Columbia, while he would himself go in search of the Essex.

He accordingly sent me and the Canadians on board the sloop Racoon, Captain Black, while he was to conduct us far enough to be safe from the Essex...

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Explosion on board.

One day, Captain Black told me at dinner that the guns had not been fired since he had left Rio, and that they would be scaled after dinner, that is fired off and reloaded. The first lieutenant began at the forward bow gun; I was near him and followed him from gun to gun as they were fired. One gun broke its fastening and recoiled a great deal. We got on to the tenth on the starboard side; I saw the priming take fire and some of the contents of the gun going off. It communicated with the bags of powder for reloading which were fixed over the gun.

The explosion was immediate from gun to gun and to the marines' powder horns along the beams of the deck. The groans of twenty six scorched men, of whom I was one, were immediately heard. I stood it however, and, recollecting that the companion stairs to the upper deck were near me on my right, I went up and met Captain Black, who was upon deck. He enquired

of me what was the matter and I replied that I knew not. I was dressed in nankeen, which was all on fire, but I found that my eyes were safe.

The smoke soon cleared away, my cot was strung up, and I was put to bed. My Canadians said that live fire had come out by the port holes. The deck was raised a little, but not to damage the ship. I lay in bed, my wounds were dressed. As I had my hat and gloves off at the time, my head took fire and the back of it could not have been known from my face had it not been for my conspicuous nose. My hands, as well as several parts of my body, legs, &c., were burnt, particularly at the seams of my clothes.

We lay in our cots and hammocks for weeks with the most excruciating pains ; the groans of the sailors were pitiful, and some swore to excess. Three or four days after the accident I became delirious, I had, however, a great advantage, my hammock being hung in the Captain's cabin, the lights open for air, and I was more closely attended by the surgeon and by my men.

In a few days, salve and linen were all exhausted, there was a sufficiency on board for the ordinary requirements of a war sloop, but not for such wholesale burning ....

My Sandwich Islander was at one of the guns ; he saw the explosion and instantly threw himself down and saved himself, except the tip of his nose.

When I was out of danger the doctor told me, one morning, while dressing me, that Jack Grant, one of my men, an Orkney man, had died of his wounds and that some other men were dead, that I had been the worst burnt of all but one, and that my temperance habits had saved me.

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Astoria.

We got to the Columbia, as mentioned by Washington Irving, on the 30th November, 1813, and anchored in Baker's Bay on a beautiful evening. The savages came on board from their villages to trade their fish. I was now able to walk on deck supported by some of the officers...

The morning after our arrival, we saw a bark canoe coming towards us from Astoria. It came alongside and I at once recognized Mr. McDougal and my old men. They came on board and told us all the news ; I was in such a state that they scarcely knew me until I shook hands with them, calling them by their names.

Washington Irving is in some part correct, but not in one principal part. I heard of no expectation of prize money, nor disappointment in any respect. The force was sent to fulfil a duty to the North-West Company ; It was no government measure. They were as it were under my directions as a Partner of that Company, and acted accordingly.

We settled with Mr. McDougal that we should land next day at about six miles from Astoria, and take possession in George's name. Matters being so settled, Mr. McDougal and his crew,—half a dozen fine *voyageurs*,—returned to Astoria. Several Natives came on board with fish. I think Concomly, their chief, was with them.

Next day, the ship's long boat was manned and Captain Black, a midshipman and myself, with the boat's complement of men, we steered for Astoria, where we found the North-West Gentlemen and the Astorians ready to receive us. To our utter disappointment, we found only a few stores and barracks surrounded by a few imperfect stockades with two or three swivels mounted near the gate. The place was not fit to resist any thing but savages. Concomly, if I remember right, was there with a few Indians.

Captain Black took a bottle of wine, or perhaps something stronger, broke it against the flag staff, hoisted the Union Jack and called it " Fort George, " and, after taking lunch, returned on board of his own vessel. My *voyageurs* and baggage were sent for and Capt. Black remained in the harbour a few days for favorable weather, and then left. **Fort George**

I understood later that he struck on the bar, put into San-Francisco for repairs and there met the Isaac Todd which gave him great assistance. Here Washington Irving ends his story.

I was senior Partner at Astoria and in command. There were here also : John George McTavish, Alexander Henry, John Stewart, Alexander Stewart, North-West partners, with some clerks and men ; and of Astor's party : John Clark, Mr. McDougal, Mr. Stewart, Donald McKenzie, partners, and several clerks and men. Climate mild with rain and little frost, plenty of fish, particularly sturgeon ; one of five hundred pounds weight was brought in. There were also provisions from the Sandwich Islands.

During the month of December, a couple of canoes, with a dozen men under Mr. Alexander Stewart, was sent up to the inland posts with supplies. They were attacked by Indians, one man was killed and Mr. Stewart badly wounded in the back with an arrow ; he never well recovered from this wound. The goods were pillaged and the party driven back. In consequence, a second strong party was sent under J. G. McTavish and Mr. Henry to recover the property and revenge the attack. They recovered part of the goods by taking a chief prisoner and keeping him till all that could be got was collected (1).

(1) See : " Adventures on the Columbia," by Ross Cos, Vol. I, page 269.

In the month of April all was ready for our departure for the interior posts with supplies, and I started with the Astorians for Fort William across the mountains, leaving Mr. Henry and Mr. McDougal in command at Astoria, in hopes of the arrival of the Isaac Todd, which vessel did arrive after our departure, having wintered at San Francisco. Both he and Mr. Donald McTavish, who had left London with me, were drowned in the Columbia in leaving the fort and in going on board to Baker's Bay, where the ship lay at anchor.

I proceeded then up the river with canoes and boats and about eighty men with two swivels; I feared nothing. We were generally under sail, the south-east wind being prevalent.........

On nearing the mountains we got scarce of provisions; we bought horses and found them equal to beef. As we made progress several of the party struck off to the different posts, while I proceeded with the others to the Mountains.

Here we left the canoes and began a mountain pass. We got over the first chain on high ground, fell into a level, the river at a current of about six knots, with a gravely bottom, where I am sure gold abounds. The river meanders much and we cut the points as it would have made a long journey of it.

We therefore made a straight cut of it, holding by one another by twos or threes, wading sometimes up to our hips in water, dashing in, frozen at one point, and coming out thawed at the opposite point and frozen again before we dashed in again. Thus we arrived at the height of land, our men carrying our blankets, provisions, &c. on their backs.

Jasper House.

It took us, I think, fairly four days hard work before we got fairly out of the mountains to Jasper Haws' (1) House, at a small lake, the source of the Athabasca River, sometimes camping

(1) A clerk of the North-West Company.



on snow twenty feet deep, so that the fires we made in the evening were fifteen feet or twenty feet below us next morning. At one encampment we went below and camped at the bottom very comfortably for that night.

One of my men on the east side of the mountains broke his leg, I had to splinter it the best I could and left him with one man till he got well to reach Jasper's House.

I remained a couple of days at this post to rest ourselves and to prepare a canoe, paddles, &c, then departed, descending a stiff current at the rate of six or seven knots an hour. Next day, we got at the entrance at Pembina River. I was here at home as it were, having been there some two or three years before.

We ascended the Pembina for two days till we got to Pembina Portage, where we left our canoe, and with our "all" on the men's backs, we proceeded on the Portage, a mere trail half way wood and half way prairies with small lakes, plenty of game : swans, geese, ducks, prairie hens. Next day we got across sixty miles, very much tired, to Fort Augustus.............

....

At Fort Augustus, I prepared a canoe in a couple of days and re-embarked once more on the noble Sascatchewan and we were soon amongst the buffaloes, deers and bears, &c., but no time was to be lost, as the season was advanced. We proceeded on to Fort William to report proceedings since leaving Portsmouth in the Isaac Todd.

Having determined to retire from the country and having no department to attend to at Fort William, I requested a canoe with retiring *voyageurs*, and I embarked for Montreal with the Astorians.

About half way to Sault St Mary's, we met, or rather saw at a distance, a small canoe coasting along : we made towards it

and found it to be Captain McCargo and two *voyageurs*—captain of the schooner on the lake.

He reported that he had made his escape and was bound for Fort William, to give the information that the Sault establishment had been burned down by the enemy, the horses all burnt alive and his schooner taken. The stores had been taken and all they could not take was burnt.

I told him to proceed while I would continue and ascertain whether the enemy had gone away, or if they were laying in wait to make a prize of the furs then ready to the amount of one hundred pounds sterling, and to inform the Hon. William McGillivray, who was the principal agent. If I found none of the enemy at Sault St Mary I would proceed on Lake Huron and ascertain if the lake was clear of war vessels, and I would act according to circumstances, and that if there was danger I would meet them or let them know. I knew that with only one canoe I could escape them (1).

I got to the Sault and found all as he described, every thing burnt, even the horses. I remained here a night and proceeded to Lake Huron and met a small canoe on the lake proceeding westward. I overhauled it and found it to be Mr. Franks, an old Mackinac trader and four Indians with a dozen fresh American scalps. They were bound for Mackinac, which was in our possession.

Mr. Franks having seen nothing on the lake, I proceeded to French River, the route for canoes to Montreal, and encamped at the mouth of the river, where I could see any thing which might occur.

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(1) Franchère, in his "*Relation d'un voyage à la côte Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique Septentrionale, en* 1810-11-12-13-14," says that the returns of the North-West Company for 1814 amounted to £200,000, and were carried in forty seven large canoes and were escorted by more then three hundred well armed men, to defend them against the Americans.

In a couple of days, a boat under sail came round the point eastward. I immediately ordered my canoe and half a dozen men in the water. While doing so, a second boat appeared and I determined on ascertaining who they were, and told the other gentlemen to let Mr.   know the facts if I was taken prisoner.

I pushed with all the power I could to the boats, which by this time had passed on under sail and were ahead of me. I fired a shot ahead of them and they took down sail, and, to my joy, saw an officer of the Navy with the British buttons.

He had commanded an armed schooner. Two American schooners met him ; he got into Natasagué River where he thought he might be safe, but they manned their boats, took his vessel, and he and his crew made their escape in the boats and were on their way to Makinac.............. ....

He had not gone much farther when he met the brigade keeping near shore so as to be out of sight and have easy access to the islands if the enemy appeared. In the evening, all arrived safe at French River....... ....

Capture of two American sloops.

It appears that, soon after the two boats had left or parted with the brigade,—perhaps 25 miles further up the lake,—the two schooners had cast anchor abreast of a certain point where nothing could escape being seen and taken. It being now dark the lieutenant and his two boats got passed without observation. He remarked their position and proceeded to Makinac, where he prepared in a short time boats and volunteers to attack the two vessels. He left Mackinac in the afternoon, and concealed his party and boats behind a point of land till the hour he thought best for the attack.

Colonel William McKay was of the party with some *voyageurs* —as brave a man as ever was on earth—a partner also of the North-West Company. He related to me the circumstances.

Notice

Before day light, the party directed their course to the vessels, unobserved. At day break, they saw but one vessel; it appears that the other had been despatched to the Sault as an additional surety that the furs would be intercepted. The latter vessel, it appears, had gone to the Sault and found that all had passed safe about two hours before. This hastened their return to their consort.

In the mean time, the Mackinac party pushed on, came along side and were fired upon. But they boarded and carried her, pinning, as McKay said, some of the crew with their fixed bayonets to the deck. Having made all secure and snug they laid quiet at anchor, expecting the return of the other from the Sault.

They had not been more than four hours in this situation when they saw the other returning. They lay quiet, prevented any signals ; the vessel cast anchor at leeward. Upon this they raised anchor quietly and bore down upon the late arrival, poured in a broadside and boarded. Then, without much loss, they took both schooners and brought them to Makinac...........

....

I was once more in Montreal; I left off the idea of going to England, and passed the winter amidst gaiety, amusements and feasting.

1815. The North-West Company were then in the height of their troubles with the Earl of Selkirk, who now found that making out his outfits—he was blended with the Hudson's Bay Company in the fur trade—from Lachine brought his men in too close intercourse with the North-West Company. He determined to alter his plans and pitched upon Terrebonne for his head quarters, where men, goods, canoes, &c. were conveyed. Messrs

Colin Robertson, John Clark and some others acted as chiefs under the Earl.

There were in the village of Terrebonne about four hundred *voyageurs* fitting out for the Hudson's Bay territory by way of Fort William. They had possession on an inn, a good large house, kept by one Allard. Colonel McKay was owner of this inn and Allard's lease was now expiring, if I remember right, on the 1st of May.

This party, headed by Robertson and Clark, formerly clerks of the North-West Company, who had been some years before under my command in the North, but whom the Company had discharged, became very troublesome, dangerous, and insulting in the village, making it dangerous to any one connected with the North-West Company to pass the streets.

There were in the village several families connected with that Company : The Hon. Roderick McKenzie, an old partner, Mr. Chaboillez, Mr. David Thompson ; Mr. James McKenzie of Quebec, was also there at that time.

Colonel McKay's lease to Allard being to expire next day, I was requested by the Hon. W. McGillivray and others of the N. W. Co. to go out and try and dispossess Lord Selkirk's party of the inn, giving me an instrument in writing to that effect. I undertook the task and took a calash and carter next morning.

We got to Terrebonne, I stopped at my first acquaintance's house, the late Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Chaboillez's house was nigh. I, of course, told my errand ; after half on hour conversation I moved to go through the village, both those gentlemen objected, saying I would be mobbed and abused, as I had to pass the inn to get to Mr. McKenzie's house, where I intended to dine.

This could not prevent my purpose, I passed without any hesitation. After dinner, I was warned against attempting to

get possession of the inn, I said I had come out for that purpose, and whatever might happen I must act as expected. I took my hat, no one moved to accompany me but Mr. James McKenzie, a brave fellow.

We had not far to go down street when we came to the house. There were inside and outside about three hundred *voyageurs*, and some bullies among them, we were told The house was a two story house of stone ; inside, a half dozen steps from the bar room.

I mounted these steps when I was pushed very resolutely ; had it not been that Mr. McKenzie was close behind, I would have fallen upon my back, but he bore me up. I had a cane in my hand, sharp point of steel containing also a small sword. I did not draw it but pointing the steel point before me I remounted at a rush the steps again and made my entrance good with Mr. McKenzie.

The bar room was full of men. I enquired for Mr. Allard ; he was not to be found. His wife was within the bar. I said I had come to take possession and got my writing out of my pocket. She said she would take no writing ; I then read it, when having done so, I said the house must be clear when I came back next morning. I made my way out, all hands making a clear passage for me..

....

I then went in search of a magistrate, could find none to take one Morin, their bully who pushed me back ; all had left the village. Next morning, I took my carter and calash and passed by the inn, all was quiet and in two days all had gone up Lake of Two Mountains and the village was clear of them................

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I have thus, my dear de Bellefeuille, written you this brief sketch in my 86th year.

It may naturally be expected that, at that age, the memory is gone. If I was to write it over with some more reflexion, I could spin it out at three times the length. Many incidents occur to my memory which I had forgotten as I went along. The whole is a plain, unvarnished tale and unadorned language ; all matter of fact. Dates may be wrong, but that will not alter facts. As my business was not with others, there is in this, egotism which I could not avoid ; your wishes are what interested me.

Your affectionate father,

John McDonald.

26th March 1859.

Mr. GEORGE KEITH

LETTERS

TO

Mr. RODERIC McKENZIE

1807-1817

THE MACKENZIE RIVER AND
GREAT BEAR LAKE DEPARTMENTS

THE MOUNTAIN RIVER, *RIVIÈRE AUX LIARDS.*

The country.—*Rivière aux Liards.*—The Beaver Indians; a better class of Indians; their kindness to their women.—Vocabulary.—Beaver Indian songs and tales: "The Flood."—"The Man in the Moon," &c.—Their religion and ideas of justice.—Social life.—Quarrels with the Hudson Bay people.—Starvation.

GREAT BEAR LAKE.

The Rocky Mountain.—Mineral productions; salt springs.—Trees and shrubs.—Ice banks; intense cold.

The Natives, the "Red Knives."—Abject condition of their women.—Religion and morality.—Interior economy and habitations, &c.

THE FILTHY LAKE.

The Natives; their dread of the Red Knives.—Respect for and care of the aged.—Individual preeminence.—Early marriages and degrees of affinity.—Freedom granted to women.—Trade and interior economy.—Winter habitations.

THE LONG-ARROWED INDIANS.

Their country; the climate.—Improvidence of the Natives; their powers of endurance.—The trade.

Confession among the Beaver Indians.—Murder of Alexander Henry.—Quarrels with the Earl of Selkirk.

Mr. GEORGE KEITH. (1)

LETTERS TO

Mr. RODERIC McKENZIE.

MacKenzie's River Department, January 7th, 1807.

Roderick MacKenzie, Esq.,

Sir,

I received your obliging letter last Fall, and cannot reflect without pleasure upon the honour it would do me, if I could in the least contribute to your laudable undertaking ; at the same time, I am grieved to find that you have taken the trouble to address me upon such a subject, conscious of my inability with

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(1) Mr. George Keith—the brother, I believe, of Mr. James Keith, who was for many years Chief Factor of the Hudson Bay Company at Lachine—passed most of his life in the dreary departments of the North : Athabaska, Mackenzie River and Great Bear Lake. At the coalition of the Hudson Bay and North-West Companies, in 1821, he became a Chief Trader of the combined concern, and continued in the North-West fur trade till 1842, when he left for Scotland, where he died, leaving one daughter married to a Mr. Swanston.

Mrs. Swanston died in Montreal, and left an only son, Mr. Thomas Swanston, still living at Prince-Albert, in the North-West Territories.



the pen, as also my imperfect knowledge regarding any thing of consequence in this quarter. Add to this the ignorance and stupidity of the Natives, circumstance which, I hope, will excuse the imperfect idea given by me upon the subject.

The country.

This establishment may be reckoned at ten days march by water from the mouth of the river. It is situated upon the north side of the river, between two small rivers. The country, bordering upon the Rocky Mountains, scarcely a day's march from this establishment, in a south-easterly direction, is woody and irregular ; the soil is sandy and deep. Upon the south side of the river, the country is pretty level and covered with fir, birch, poplar, alder, willow and *bois rouge ;* there are *poire*, gooseberry and raspberry bushes ; the former are very scarce and the latter ripen about the 15th to the 20th of August.

Animals.

Large animals consist of the moose deer, and the wild goat ; the latter is to be found only upon the Rocky Mountains, and is much the same as in Europe, though smaller and without beard ; their hair is short and white, their flesh very good and surprisingly fat, when killed in the proper season. The lesser species or fur kinds are : the black and grizzled bear, the latter inhabits the Rocky Mountains or thereabouts, and are apparently not so ferocious as those in the Peace River, beaver, otter, lynx, marten, mink, ermine, wolverine, muskrat, wolf, &c. The Natives kill the most part of these animals by running them down with dogs until fatigued ; they afterwards make use of bows and arrows or guns. They sometimes entangle them in snares made of green cords. They kill the beaver and wolverine for the most part with traps, and the others with snares. The method by which they entice the moose deer into the snare is performed thus : they clear a narrow road by felling the underwood and placing it on each side of the road so as to make an impediment for the animal to get in ; in this road they leave small openings

here and there upon each side, into which they set their snares with a piece of wood five or six feet long tied to the end of the snare, in order to entangle the animal in the thick woods, when taken. The beaver traps are constructed on the lodge where the beaver appear to be most employed.

This establishment abounds with small lakes, some of which are very rich in fish, such as white fish, trout, pike and *doré*, &c. The Natives make use of nets made of the fine bark of the willow, twisted and plaited about the size of Holland twine; it is stronger and preferable to net thread, particularly when prepared in winter, they likewise angle with hooks made of bone.

This river, denominated by the Natives, *Rivière de Liard*, (1) discharges its waters into Mackenzie's river, but it is not known where it takes its sources. It is pretty broad all along, but is generally very shallow and rapid. About one and a half days march from MacKenzie's river, it becomes a continuation of rapids for upwards five leagues, and so shallow from one side of the river to the other, that some years, in the Fall, a canoe loaded with six or eight pieces, cannot proceed without making an almost continual portage. Within this distance there is only one portage, about twenty paces long, occasioned by a cascade which crosses the river. In spring and in the beginning of summer there are none, but the navigation is very difficult on account of the strength of the current. The banks all along and on each side of these rapids, are very high and perpendicular, consisting of broken rocks. There are other rapids further up, but of little consequence. *The Rivière aux Liards.*

About a day's march above the rapids, the river presents a fine view to the traveller; the Rocky Mountain to the north, and a

(1) Formerly called "Grand River Forks," and "Mountain River" by the whites, and *The-tla-desse,* River between rocks, by the Natives.

fine level country all along to the south, interspersed with small rivers and islands, neither of which of any note, except the *Bis-kag-ha* River, or Sharp Edge River, not far distant from the Fort, and so called from the flint stones very commun in that place, and which the old inhabitants, the *Na ha né* tribe, made use of as knives and axes. This tribe of Indians has abandoned the country on account of the encroachments of its present possessors.

The Beaver Indians; their origin.

The Natives of this establishment call themselves "Beaver Indians," a name which they claim as descendants from the Beaver Indians of Peace River, from whom they were seperated some ages ago, when attacked by enemies. The terror caused by this sudden attack induced them to fly for safety to the north-westward. The reason they also give for the origin of their name is that they generally were and are still clothed with beaver skins. I cannot determine upon this point, as I am ignorant of the language, but the original language of this tribe does not sound like the modern Beaver Indian language of the Natives about Peace River. (1)

Population

I am uninformed as to their ancient population in old times, but those now residing about this establishment amount to 46 married men, 16 bachelors or young men, 38 children of the male sex, and 32 girls, so that the number of souls in all is 178. According to them, the population has increased since the establishment of McKenzie's River by the whites, who have protected them from the inroads of other tribes, which previously killed numbers of them.

Game Laws.

These Indians are very honest with regard to property, and are extremely particular respecting their hunting regulations.

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(1) See Wentzel's letters, 1st series.

For instance, when an Indian discovers one or more beaver lodges, if not already appropriated, he immediately puts a mark upon them, and no one dares to intrude upon his property without his permission, although I know of no punishment inflicted upon the guilty party unless it be the infamy attached to the action, which is considered as very mean and heinous. At the same time they are by no means of a hoggish disposition; the best hunter of large animals, when with his relations, has the smallest share of what he kills. They assist one another with provisions when in want, and their principal food consists of hares, beavers and moose deer, generally roasted. They begin to be pretty expert in killing the latter with guns, particularly in summer, but they cure its meat very badly; they often eat putrified meat, but are very cleanly with their dishes.

In general, they are pretty industrious and good economists in many respects. Their principal amusement is dancing, being generally averse to gaming unless rich in ammunition, when they will venture to stake a ball or so against its value. They are ignorant, without being superstitious, and ungovernable in some respects by their chiefs, whom they obey only in hopes of being recompensed. They are of middle stature and of an inoffensive disposition. They appear to have no idea of a supernatural Being; however, they seem to entertain some conception of a future state, alleging that the dead must penetrate through the earth, after which they find a large lake, which being crossed, a new world is found in which they hope to find their ancestors with whom they begin life anew.

A better class of Natives.

Cohabiting is only forbidden to mother and son, brother and sister. Brothers cohabit with one another's women openly. The women are indulged with every thing attainable, without being subjected to any brutal treatment or hard menial labour, as many other tribes in this country. In short, they are a very friendly

Kindness to women.

tribe, sympathizing for their sick and aged, whom they never abandon, carrying them about—without distinction of age or sex—upon their shoulders in their different peregrinations. Their only vice, in my opinion, is lying, which they always practised, (although not so much as formerly) very often with a view to prejudice one another in the opinion of the whites, notwithstanding the many remontrances of the latter against this practice.

Thus I have endeavoured to give a short sketch of some particulars relating to this corner, (commerce, &c, excepted, which I humbly leave to the decision of a more accurate and better judge), as far as my knowledge and ability will admit. Upon which account I again request you will be kind enough to excuse the deficiency of the present from

Sir,

Your very obedient

and humble servant,

GEORGE KEITH.

VOCABULARY. (1)

Father	Téhé.
Mother	Anna.
My son	Cetchein.
My daughter	Cet-hué.
Brother	Coonega.
Husband	Ced-dinnah.
Sister	Sadeté.
Wife	Cetsickhé.
Head	Cet-thi.
Nose	Cinsie.
Eyes	Cinaché.
Fear	Cet-segg.
Thus	Tet-chin.
Fish	Thlu yah.
To sleep	Acht-hé.
I	Cenné.
Thou	Ninné.
To eat	Net-hé.
River	Desse.
Mountain	Sheuth.
To drink water	Tou-heddon.
Carry	Yic-Yech.
Stupid	Guyion-kité.
White	Te-cuthlé.
Black	Tenet-thlets.
Red	Tetsid.

(1) See the vocabulary given by M. Wentzel in his letters. Although these Indians may be the same tribe as those inhabiting the mouth of *Liard River,* it will be observed that the language is considerably different.

Lying	Waosé.
Pain	Allijeh.
Lagy	Toucin-cien.
Ice	Tchin.
Day	Zinich.
Night	Echtlijé.
Summer	Jimbih.
Winter	Yach-geh.
Autumn	Teeh-tsellé.
Spring	Issegeh.
Earth	Déeh.
One	Thladedé.
Two	Ouk-hi-didté.
Three	Tahé.
Four	Tingeh.
Five	Lachethé.
Six	Etsingtahe.
Seven	Etsingtahe-gescthlizeh.
Eight	Etsing-tingeth.
Nine	Et-thligeh-dacie.
Ten	Ghonenno.
Twenty	Ouk, hi-ghonenno.
Thirty	Tahe ghonenno.
Forty	Tingeh ghonenno.
To day	Douch ko.

N. B.—The above vocabulary may be pronounced according to the french Alphabet.

MacKenzie's River Department, 25th Nov. 1807.

Roderic MacKenzie, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

Your obliging and kind favor of the 10th July I duly received, and am happy to find that you seem pleased with the idea given in my last, regarding my winter quarters. I could wish that my little knowledge of the natural secrets of the Athabasca could be deemed worthy to be communicated. My first years in this country were spent not much to my own improvement, either with regard to my occupation, and much less in searching into the natural secrets of the country, both of which depend greatly the one on the other. I lacked the proper qualifications and opportunities and, some times, the example, which, then, might have been of some service to me and much more since. I do not know any thing that might further illustrate the description formerly given of this place, and having been lashed to it for many succeeding years, I find myself entirely incapable of ushering out of it, as I could only give a very imperfect idea of any other place.

Beaver Indian tales and songs.

Respecting tales, traditions and songs, I have been able to pick up only a few of the former; I have chosen those I thought to be the best, which you will find enclosed. The translation is litteral, as far as the idiom would permit, but I imagine you will not find them worthy to be exposed in print, however improved and corrected.

The songs are a composition of incoherent sounds, generally made in imitation of some wild animal, such as the bear, wolverine, &c. ; many are borrowed from other tribes, and all are accompanied with a dance on great occasions. The love songs are upon a similar strain, but not so rude. The lamentation song, upon the death of a relative, mentions the different names of the members of the deceased, including the organs of speech and not omitting, if a male................ I ought to remark that each word, with the chorus, forms a *couplet :*

I shall, with pleasure, continue my communication annually so long as it may not become irksome or unworthy of your notice ; but I shall do my best and no one can do more I therefore flatter myself that this confession will be sufficient excuse from

Dear Sir, with the greatest respect

Your very obedient and humble servant

GEORGE KEITH.

The following is the substance of two Beaver Indian tales, literally translated, as far as the idiom of the language, and the capacity of the translator will permit.

The Indian Hercules !

Formerly there was an old man of a singular character who, together with some others of his tribe, in some of their excursions, used to overhear as if it were the barking of a dog, but in fact it was found to be a human creature in the form of a monster, who employed every artifice to entice the curious and unwary stranger to his habitation, in hope of killing him. This detestable practise continued to be carried on for a long time

with great success till, at length, the old man above mentioned, suspecting something very extraordinary had befallen his relatives, proposed to go in quest of them, and accordingly went and happened, withont being observed, to espy the destroyer of his relatives.

He found him to be like another man, with this difference that he had a tail like a dog hanging from his posterior. This monster had a wife who lived at the foot of a very high precipice, he himself generally remaining, in the day time, upon the top, and when any human being happened to approach him, he suddenly attacked and rolled them down the precipice, his wife giving the finishing blow to his existence, after which the victim was served up as food to these monsters.

The old man discovered himself to the monster, who accosted him saying he had first discovered him, and that he must come to him. The old man replied that he lied, for he had seen him long before on the top of the precipice, barking like a dog. However, the old man, not being intimidated, advanced while the other secreted a large stone—the usual weapon of his barbarity—between his body and shirt, but not having his belt girt, the stone dropped to his feet just as the old man came to close quarters, which the latter observing, furiously attaked the monster and tumbled him down the precipice. The wife, unsuspicious and without examining further, fell upon her husband and put an end to his existence, which the old man no sooner perceived than he descended the precipice and approached the old woman, who was dissembling her sorrow, and asked him from whence he came. " I wander about ", replied he. " Look upward, " says she, having a sharp pointed bone to stab him if he should lift his eyes upwards ; but the old man, suspecting her treachery, interrupted her and told her that the ermine was eating the grease behing her, whereupon, turning about to save the grease, she was killed by the old man.

Such was the tragical end of the monster. The old man performed many more actions of the same nature and was looked upon as immortal.

Another tale.

There was a man and his wife. The former went out a hunting, and, during his absence, a strange Indian arrived and carried away his woman. Upon the route, they arrived at a large lake which they crossed in a canoe, and after walking a long time he arrived with his prey amongst his relations, who, according to custom, lived upon bad putrified meat, which the woman, not being accustomed to such food, found very unpalatable.

One day, her ravisher being out hunting, a young girl came to visit her, and the conversation happening to turn on their bad living, the young visitor inveighed bitterly against it, and asked the other if she had a brother with her relations, and was answered in the affirmative. " Well ", says she, " let us escape and go to your relatives. " " Why, " replied the other, " you laugh at me..." " No ! I will fetch my bag," answered she, " and deceive my mother by telling her that I wish to sleep with you, and we will desert in the night; " which she accordingly did, and both set off the same night.

After travelling very far they found a very broad lake : " How shall we cross over this lake ? " says the married woman, " we have no canoe ? " " Courage ! " replied the other, fetching her bag, out of which she took two feathers, and placing them in the form of a cross upon the waters, " come " says she, " let us look for berries." When they returned they found in place of the two feathers, a fine canoe with paddles, by which means they soon crossed the lake. Their provision being soon consumed, the married woman began to despond, which the other

remarking demanded a *pichou* snare which she took and set in the woods, and the next day visiting the snare found a large moose deer stifled in it, which marvellous circumstance enabled them to continue their journey, and the happiness of both was complete, the one in being restored to her husband, and the other in being united in matrimony to the brother of her travelling companion.

P. S. I was about inserting another but was interrupted by a parcel of Indians. I dare not retard the express any longer. I hope the two former will serve as a specimen as well as half a dozen.

Your humble servant

GEORGE KEITH.

Roderic MacKenzie Esq.

MacKenzie's River Department, 1st Dec. 1808.

Rod. MacKenzie, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

Indian tales.

Your kind letter of the 1st July was duly handed to me very late last fall. I am happy that the tales, from their novelty, are passable. I have this year enclosed two more, which I flatter myself will be more acceptable. The one treats of a flood, and is as correctly translated from the original as I possibly could. In my opinion, it is a little singular invention of those Indians, and I assure you it is genuine, as I had it from an old woman who never had any communication with the Red Knives or Chipewyans. That such a flood happened is readily and firmly believed by those of the Natives who know the tale, but it is not generally known among them.

The other is short, and I believe of no further consequence than that it shows that the Natives are apt to endeavour to trace into the origin of things. I wished to transcribe some more, as it is an agreable pastime, besides the satisfaction it gives me to think that you would be sensible to my assiduity to complete your desire, but I could not find any acceptable, because they are generally nonsensical or full of obscenity.

I have looked over your memorandum several times, and I am sorry to find that I cannot add any information of consequence to what is mentioned in a former letter. There are many words that my dictionary does not explain. I should have

contributed willingly as much as possible to the collection of songs, but I have met with a disappointment in a necessary article, which deprives me of the pleasure of forwarding any thing of the kind this winter, and indeed you do not lose much, for I am a great drone myself, and my men this year are little better, so that we are well coupled in this respect.

Trade at this post is decreasing considerably ; we were **Trade.** upwards of ten packs short last spring, and it is evident that the ensuing return will be considerably less. This decrease is principally due to a quarrel which unfortunately happened last spring betwixt the Natives of this post and a strange tribe of Indians inhabiting the Rocky Mountains. Two of the Indians of this post being in pursuit of two young men of that tribe who fled (the others had remained to their lodges and had already made peace), one of the former, a cracked brained fellow, fired with shot upon his companion, and severely wounded him. To atone for this accident, he returned to the stranger's camp, where his relatives were peaceably seated, and instantly shot one of the strangers. In short, confusion now prevailed, and the Beaver Indians, dreading the resentment of the others, poured several discharges upon the feeble and innocent *Trilli-da-ha*, *tiné* or *Gens d'Orignal*, and 22 of the latter, including men, women and children were barbarously slaughtered.

Sickness also has been very prevalent amongst the Indians of this post since last spring, several of which (excellent hunters) have visited the shades below. I shall trouble you with a letter to Mr. MacKenzie, which you will find enclosed, and allow me to remain

Dear sir,

With the greatest respect,

Your very obedient and humble servant,

George Keith.

THE FLOOD.

A TALE OF

THE BEAVER INDIANS OF MACKENZIE'S RIVER.

In former times, when people were very numerous upon the earth, it happened that the sun ceased to give heat or light. An unremitting fall of snow threatened to annihilate every living creature upon the earth; the tops of the loftiest trees were already almost buried in snow, and it was with great difficulty fire wood could be obtained.

In order to discover the cause of this dreadful phenomenon, a party of Indians agreed to go upon discoveries, and after having marched many days without observing any difference in the climate, discovered a squirrel's nest. Squirrels in those days were eminently endowed with sense and reason, besides the gift of speech. Here the adventurers pathetically stated their sufferings arising from the sun having been stolen from them, and asked his advice. The squirrel bids them repose until he should dream. This dream lasted some days, and on awaking he told them that a she bear held the sun from them.

Our adventurers upon this information determined to go in-quest of the bear and engaged this sagacious squirrel to accompany them. After great fatigue, they arrived in a beautiful

country which the bear with her two cubs inhabited. They soon discovered her wash or couch with the two cubs: the mother was out upon an excursion on the other side of the lake nigh to her retreat. Our adventurers' attention was soon attracted by a long line of *babishe* (1) suspended from the cloud and tied to a piece of wood which lay upon the top of the bear's covering and dwelling place. Upon this line, at certain distances, there were a number of bags neatly laced with *babishe* and which seemed to contain something mysterious

Our adventurers did not fail to remark this line, and the prudent squirrel averred that no time should be lost, as the mother bear might arrive soon, that an explanation should be extorted by threats from the cubs concerning the line and the number of bags. Accordingly all hands assuming a savage look entered the couch with bended bows and quivers full of arrows and threatened the cubs with instant death if they did not reveal theirs mother's secrets. The terrified cubs promised to comply. " The first bag upon that line, what does it contain ? Snow," replied the large cub. "The second ? Rain. The third ? Thunder. The fourth ? The Stars. The fifth ?" At this question the cub refused to comply, but the adventurers, presenting their daggers and arrows to his breast intimidated him, and he very reluctantly replied that the fifth bag contained the sun.

This put a stop to further enquiries. The active squirrel commanded to his assistance, a pike, first, a *loche* and a mouse. " Come," says the squirrel to the pike and *loche*, " be quick; go " and descend the bag containing the sun, and you, my little " mouse, go upon the other side of the lake and nibble the bear's " paddle half through, so that it may break when she forces it " in paddling ; you are little and she will not perceive you."

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(1) Cords made of leather and which the Indians called *Assapapish,* which the French converted into *Babiche.*

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Off they go upon their errands. The *loche* was very slow in her movements, but the pike soon ascended and untied the bag, and was upon his return when he met the *loche* whom he thus accosts : " Be you gone you tardy creature ! " " Nay, but give " me the bag " retorted the *loche* " and 'ill mend my pace ; you " will see how I will twist my tail." The pike, not to lose time by further resistance, delivered the bag, but finding that the *loche* could not make way for him, snatched the bag from the latter and soon descended.

The mouse, after executing her task returned at the same time, and the pike was about cutting the bag with his teeth when the bear made her appearance on the other side of the lake, and seeing strangers at her home, quickly shoved her canoe into the water and was crossing with all speed when, to her surprise, her paddle broke. The pike by this time had made a small hole in the bag, and to the unspeakable joy of our adventurers, out flies the Sun, the appearance of which entirely disconcerted the bear. She made the earth tremble with her howlings, but finding that she could not make way without her paddle, she trust herself into the water and made the best speed she could by means of her paws. After all her roaring and exertions she reflected that revenge was now out of her power, as the adventurers had fled, and her power with the sun was now expiring ; but in order not to be deprived of the sun's influence, while yet she had some power over him, she in her turn was prudent enough, before it was too late, to command the Sun to show himself to all the Earth, that every one might enjoy his powerful influence.

Let us now return to our exulting adventurers, who soon after found themselves plunged into the other extreme. They had not proceeded many days upon their return when they were threatened with a deluge arising from the impression that the heat of the sun made upon the snow. The waters increasing

more and more, our adventurers redoubled their pace in order to get to the summit of a very high rocky mountain. Unfortunately only two of them, a man and his wife, reached the top of the mountain, all the rest were drowned in the waters. Upon the summit of this mountain were gathered two of every living creature (male and female) that liveth upon the Earth, many of the drowned people tranformed themselves into fowls of the air and had the sagacity to retire to this place.

The waters continuing a long time, reduced those creatures to great extremities for want of food. It was at length proposed by the *canard de France*, the *petit plongeux* and the buzzard to dive into the waters in order to try to find ground. Accordingly the *canard de France* showed the example, but soon made his appearance upon the surface of the waters, and only served as a laughing stock to his companions. The *plongeux* proceeded next, but found nothing. The buzzard dived next, and remained under water until his strength was almost exhausted, and was some time above the water before he could impart his adventure, which was however unsuccessful.

After remaining some days inactive, they again dived, and the buzzard alone, after appearing upon the surface seemingly in a lifeless state, had his bill full of earth, which showed that the waters were decreasing. They continued to dive with unremitting diligence for sometime afterwards, throwing out now and then some bitter sarcasm against the least successful, in which dispute, the *plongeux* did not fail to remind the *canard de France* of his bad jealous head. In short the waters dried upon the earth, but as yet the situation was deplorable, as they could scarcely find even roots for their subsistence.

During this interval, l'*épervier*, l'*émerillon*, the *canard de France* agreed to change the colour of their feathers, (at that time, all

the species were white) which they effected, but by what means is not known. Immediately after this event, the *corbeau* or raven made his appearance. " Come, " says l'*épervier* to the *corbeau*, " look at my feathers, are they not beautiful ? would " you not wish to have a coat like mine ?" " Hold your tongue," rejoined the *corbeau*, " with your crooked bill ; is not white " handsomer than any other colour ? " The others argued with the *corbeau* to consent, but he remained inflexible, which so exasperated l'*épervier* and the others that they determined to revenge this affront, and each taking a burnt coal in his bill they blackened him all over, and those who could swim took refuge in the river, the others escaped by their superior swiftness in flying.

The *corbeau*, in the mean time, enraged at this treatment, and determined not to be singular, espied a flock of *étourneaux* and, without shaking off the black dust from his feathers, threw himself amongst them and bespattered them all over with black, which is the reason of their still retaining this colour.

Some days afterwards the *corbeau*, in order to vex his enemies, paid them another visit ; he had brought with him about his neck a collar upon which were lumps of the fat of the moose and reindeer. L'*épervier* and the others accost him and ask for a little fat, adding that he was very hungry. The *corbeau* made no reply and would not even discover to them where he had taken the fat. The confederates were highly incensed at his behaviour, and resolved to rob him, and l'*épervier* was pitched upon for the enterprise. Off the robber goes, and with one grapple, carries off all the fat. The *corbeau* immediately went off in a passion, but thought the adventure fortunate enough, as he was not personnally hurt.

This circumstance of the fat roused a desire in some of the feathered species to partake of this good *chère* with the *corbeau*,

and the *chat-huant* or *chouette* undertook to observe the *corbeau* in his flight, and directed *l'épervier* to throw some ashes upon his eyes when he should tell him, for his sight would probably fail him after steadfastly looking after the *corbeau* for a long time. The *chat-huant* called aloud for ashes, which were no sooner applied to his eyes than he saw clearly, and was enabled to trace the *corbeau* to his retreat, which was in a valley beyond a very high mountain. This fortunate discovery was no sooner made than both man and beast, &c., were informed of it and they all agreed, the water fowls excepted, to go in search of the *corbeau's* dwelling, and took their departure the next day.

After incredible sufferings from want of food as well as from the fatigue of the journey, they arrived at his retreat which was a large lodge covered with the branches of the fir tree. The door of the lodge was made of the pounces of the reindeer. The wolf offered his services first to break open the door, but the fox, on account of his cunning and swiftness, was fixed upon to do this office. The latter, running with all his might, the door split in twain, by which means a prodigious number of moose and reindeer were liberated, being formerly shut up in this lodge.

The man with his wife, who by this time had several children, killed a number of these animals, and seeing that they had enough of provisions for a long time, let the rest go unhurt whither they pleased. Here, this man made an agreement with the beasts of the Earth and the fowls of the Air, (for he was afraid some of them would assume their former shape and become enemies to him and his family) to retain every one his present form, engender and cover the earth ; and he on his part agreed not to assume any other form and likeness, nor deter them from wandering whither-soever they choose, and both parties agreeing, seperated, which separation continues to this day.

THE MAN IN THE MOON.

A TALE OR

TRADITION OF THE BEAVER INDIANS.

In the primitive ages of the world, there was a man and his wife who had no children. The former was very singular in his manner of living. Being an excellent hunter, he lived entirely upon the blood of the animals he killed. This circumstance displeased his wife, who secretly determined to play him a trick. Accordingly, one day the husband went out hunting and left orders with his wife to boil some blood in a kettle so as to be ready for supper on is return. When the time of his expected return was drawing nigh, his wife pierced a vein with an awl in her left arm, and drew a copious quantity of blood, which she mixed with a greater quantity of the blood of a moose deer, that he should not discover it, and prepared the whole for her husband's supper.

Upon his return the blood was served up to him on a bark dish, but upon putting a spoonful to his mouth he detected the malice of his wife, and, only saying that the blood did not smell well or good, threw the kettle with the contents about her ears. Night coming on, the man went to bed and told his wife to observe the moon about mid-night. After the first nap, the

woman awaking, was surprised to find that her husband was gone: she arose and made a fire, and lifting up her eyes to the moon, was astonishad to see her husband with his dog and kettle in the body of the moon from whence he has never descended. She bitterly lamented her misfortune during the rest of her days, always attributing them to her malicious invention in preparing her own blood for her husband's supper.

MacKenzie's River Department, 28th Feby 1810.

Roderic MacKenzie, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

Your obliging letter of the 5th June 1809 was duly handed to me last Fall. I am sorry that my researches this year after Indian information have been unsuccessful. I have not been able to pick up any tales or traditions worth notice, however a desire to please you and to convince you, at the same time, that the will was not wanting on my part, I have taken the liberty to send the following observations, &c. As they are more minute than what I have hitherto sent you, I hope they will be acceptable.

The Beaver Indian's ideas of Justice.

The Natives of this establishment entertain very just ideas betwixt right and wrong, and decide matters of this nature as coolly and impartially as could be expected from a set of people who are much attached to their most distant relations, and who have no determined principles or principal persons for settling such matters. We have had two instances lately of their conciliating disposition. Two Indians, not of the same family, were, at different times, wounded by their companions upon a hunting excursion ; one died soon after of his wounds and the other recovered. The latter accident was soon settled by the aggressor giving his gun to the other, but the former case was debated by a full convention of both parties, and at last, the affair being



proved to be accidental and not wilful murder, the criminal was acquitted on giving up all his property.

They have no idea of a God or Supernatural Being, and they generally attribute particular events, such as death and other casualities, to their enemies, whom they consider likewise as the authors of eclipses and other phenomena, by means of their art in the occult sciences. However, such events as the latter give them little uneasiness. Religion.

They entertain some notions of a resurrection, as appears by their death lamentations, in which they recommend the deceased to the Otter and Loon, *huard*, to conduct him over the Great Lake that leads to the other world. They are very little tinctured with superstition, and do not invoke or perform any kind of worship or adulation to any object whatever.

They have considerable confidence in their own abilities in curing diseases by performing these absurd gestures common, in a less or greater degree, to all tribes of Indians, by means of which they pretend to extract hair, toads and small pike fish from the parts of the body affected. They accompany the ceremony with a song, and at intervals suck and pull with their teeth with all their force, so that the part of the body affected and the flesh all around becomes black and blue before they give over. Every one of the male sex occasionally perform this office, and if the patient recover, it is ascribed to the address of the physician. When the patient is not under age or is a woman, those individuals, who value themselves upon their pretended science, extort payment for their pains. Letting blood, even in the proper vein, with an awl, a pointed knife, pointed white iron, &c, is common to many of them. Their medical abilities.

They are entirely ignorant of any kind of medical herbs or roots, and I believe the country produces very few of either.

The sick person, after having undergone this painful operation dares not eat a peace of meat or any thing else, until the one who acted last previously chewed and put a bit into the patient's mouth ; if this practice was omitted, the patient would consider himself lost.

Respect to the dead.

When one dies, the corpse is generally, at the expiration of twenty four hours, placed upon a scaffold to prevent the carnivorous animals from devouring it, and this scaffold is loaded with two or three rows of wood, above and below the body. All the deceased property is destroyed or placed along with him, and the most valuable under his head as a pillow. All those present contribute something to put with him, and for two or three years afterwards always lament the deceased, particularly if a male. Whenever they happen to pass nigh the tomb, those nearest kin generally leave something or other, such as a piece of dressed skin, snares, &c., &c.

Their social life.

Different families live upon a perfect equality with one another ; they seldom enter one another's lodge unless it be to eat and procure a little meat, and upon such occasions if the visitor is not hospitably entertained, he looks upon this treatment as an insult , and he serves the other in the same manner when occasion offers.

When any one kills and arrives from hunting, it is expected the others will visit him immediately in order to get a portion of what he brings ; those who do not, are considered as no friends.

They pay no external marks of respect to their leaders, and indeed the latter are little regarded. A boy will often refuse to run an errand for them unless he happens to be a nigh relation. The younger brothers while under age are subject to the elder, and the youngest son always takes care of the father and mother in their old age.

Their principal amusement is dancing, which they perform all in a circle, accompanied with a song. Young men and boys exercise themselves often in leaping and wrestling ; the latter is of use to them upon occasions as they sometimes decide their right to a woman in this way. Gaming is little prevalent amongst then. In their peregrinations, they always inform one another of the route they intend to take, and couriers now and then go from one party to another. When two or more Indian work a beaver lodge, the one who draws the beaver out of his lodge or wash gives it to some other one present. They always proportion their stay in one quarter or encampment according to the means of subsistence it affords.

They live in lodges, generally two families to a lodge, one on each side of the fire. The women seldom prepare the lodge in winter, or go for wood unless the husband is absent, and the men perform all the hard labours, so indulgent they are to the women. All partake of the same mess, but a woman in her menses lodges alone, and never stirs from her lodge. When decamping she must walk behind, and drop now and then branches of trees on the road to give notice to any one who might happen to fall upon the same road, in order to prevent stangers from having sore legs, and make them avoid this route. She pretends to be ten days in this state and suffers not her husband, except upon particularly good terms, Her paramours, however, are permitted to approach her sooner. The men are pretty good economists, but the women are always losing something, and the children bear the blame of this.

Better condition of women.

Although sometimes compelled to eat rank and putrid provisions, they are very careful in cutting up an animal, to cut away all obnoxious matter or glands, and, in summer, they often renew their bark dishes. They prefer snow water to any other kind.

Their dress.

Their summer dress (men's) consists of a leather shirt with long fringes, before and behind, neatly garnished with coloured moose hair and porcupine quills. Around the waist, they have a belt neatly wrought with porcupine quills; they wear long necklaces with fringes; their leggings and shoes go with the rest. The tender sex, of course, strives to excel in this particular, and are sometimes covered with fringes &c, almost from head to foot. A young or middle aged widow wears long leggins or breeches as a protection, and children begotten in widowhood are generally stifled upon coming to the world, a rather barbarous method of preventing scandal! The winter dresses are made of fur.

I shall cheerfully continue any information in my power, but am afraid of soon becoming an irksome correspondent. With due respect and best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

GEORGE KEITH.

P. S.—The returns were extremely deficient in this quarter last year. One of your admirers and old servant, William Smith, my interpreter, died this winter. With all his faults, he was an honest and interested servant for the Company.

MacKenzie's River Dept, 21st Jany 1811.

Roderic MacKenzie, Esq.,

Dear Sir,

I had the pleasure of receiving your kind and agreable letter of the 15th May, 1810, last fall. The last letter which I had the satisfaction of addressing to you in the course of last winter will have informed you of my fruitless researches after any thing that might be worthy of transmitting to you for the proposed publication. I am sorry to say I have been equally unsuccessful since that time...

....

I am not surprised that your brother Mr. Donald (1) got tired of the present lingering and fickle attractions of this country: this is perhaps the case with many more who are detained in it merely, I imagine, from being apprehensive of not bettering their fortunes in another quarter, which is often the case, at least with those who have but small resources and must depend upon their own abilities for their future success. This new enterprise (2) is universally known in the North, but in this corner we know little of the plans or probable issues of the undertaking. With us, at least, all must be mere conjecture at present, and time alone can develop the future.

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(1) See note 3, page 55, 1st series, " Reminiscences. "

(2) John Jacob Astor's Fur Company.

Your acquaintance, Mr. J. Clarke, is gone down this year and, if reports be correct, he will make one more of the number. Latterly, his conduct in this country was rather reprehensible and, in some instances, to my personal knowledge, very justly so. A little elevation is apt to dazzle and make us sometimes forget the previous footing we were on. This, I am persuaded, was his foible. I am always at the same post, struggling to make as many packs as possible; we were pretty lucky last year all over the department.

Your friend, I dare not presume to add, mine, Mr. Simon Fraser, has taken up his head quarters amongst us this year. His predecessor, Mr. J. G. McTavish, though a clerk, was very justly esteemed in this quarter. He has got Slave Lake Department in charge. Our friend, Mr. de Rocheblave, went out and winters at the Pic, Lake Superior; the rest you know better than I do. There was some talk of Mr. Donald McTavish retiring this year; his administration, as far as I learn, has been very able and impartial; Mr. J. McGillivray will probably succeed him.

Quarrels with H. B. Co's servants.

The Hudson Bay Company, at two Posts in English River Department, last year, made only six beavers! they are still desirous of holding out. A very melancholy catastrophe happened to a Mr. McDonald, clerk to the North-West Company in the Nepigon: he was murdered by a party of the Hudson Bay Company, the affair is probably deciding in Montreal at present. (1). We are all too apt to tamper with the Hudson Bay Company and it generally happens unfortunately that the most

(1) Mr. McDonell appears to have courted his fate by his provocation of the Hudson Bay Company's servants, who were, at that period, far more peaceably inclined than those of the North West Company. In this case they were undoubtedly acting in self defence.—See Lord Selkirk's Sketch of the Free trade, for details.—Mowat, the Hudson Bay clerk, was poorly defended and condemned to be marked in the hand with a hot iron, besides imprisonment.

serious disputes between opponents take their origin in mere trifles.

You will doubtless hear from your friend in this quarter, I leave this Department next spring, intending to go out as soon as possible to Fort William, with a view of seeing my brother somewhere or other along the route, or at that place ....

....

I remain

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient servant

George Keith.

(1) Eneas McDonell was shot in a scuffle by a servant of the Hudson Bay Company. The servant was tried in Montreal and found guilty of manslaughter.—*Note by the Hon. R. McKenzie.*

Bear Lake, McKenzie's River Department
5th January 1812.

Roderic McKenzie, Esq.

Dear Sir,

I was duly favoured with the receipt, last fall, of your agreable and obliging letter of the 8th June last, and am extremely sorry that my adverse fortune this year has scarcely afforded me the means to continue my account of this quarter.

I have had some trouble and much more anxiety this year than usual, having been stopped by the ice about seven days march from my destination, (B. Lake,) where I was detained with the people of three canoes from the 11th to the 31st Oct, without stirring from the place where we unluckily wrecked one of the canoes ; fortunately no lives nor property were lost. Our friend, Mr. Simon Fraser, is still at the head of affairs in this department.

Starvation. A very melancholy catastrophe happened at the establishment of the Forks last winter. It pains me to say that no less than three men and a child sank under their long and distressing sufferings for want of food. These poor men were Poudrier, Pilon and Wm. Henry, and the child belonged to the first. Poor Mr. Wentzel with his family and some other women and children, after almost incredible privations, were the only survivors. The distressing scenes which he unfortunately witnessed and expe-

Mr. Wentzel.

rienced digusted him with the Grand River, and he passes the winter this year with Mr. John Stewart at Rain Lake (1). There are scarcely any hares in MacKenzie's River Department now-a-days, and upon this account we have much ado to make a sufficiency of provisions for the winter at the posts when there is no fish.

I paid a visit to Fort Chipewyan last summer in hopes of being indulged with a passport to Lac La Pluie the ensuing spring, but this agreable expectation faded with the arrival of Mr John McGillivray from Fort William, who succeeds Mr. D. McTavish in the Athabasca. We had poor returns all over the country last year, Mr. John Thompson winters in English River Department........................ ....

Dear Sir,

Your very obedient and obliged servant

George Keith.

(1) See Mr. Wentzel's letters, page 106, 1st series.

MacKenzie's River Dept., Bear Lake, Nov. 8th, 1812.

Roderic MacKenzie Esq.

Dear Sir,

You much respected and friendly letter of the 22nd May last duly came to hand............................... ....

....

I had the pleasure of addressing you a few lines last winter, but without being able to transmit to you any communications for your highly interesting undertaking. The novelty of my situation, with little opportunity of gathering information from the Natives, exclusive of other circumstances, prevented me till this day from performing this agreable task. I have however the satisfaction of transmitting along with the present an "essay" on this part of the country and its inhabitants.

I am aware you will find it very deficient and unsatisfactory, but it is the best my circumscribed information and ability can aim at for the present. Had I time for another trial, I might perhaps enter into more details upon the items of customs and manners, both of which are susceptible of illustration as well as enlargement. As it is, you are at liberty to lop and choose as you please, I have no further view than perhaps to have been fortunate enough to hit upon something hitherto untouched in your former communications from Bear Lake.

I am sorry to hear that a few departments are still in arrears in their contribution to the laudable work you have undertaken.

It is to be presumed that the generality of young men in this country have little ambition of appearing in print; as to myself, I assure you, I am under much anxiety for a correspondence to which I get attached more and more.

The great and serious change of politics in Canada is much against us in this country. We always entertained a hope that this unfortunate American war would cease, and God only knows how and when it may be brought to a conclusion.........

....

A number of the gentlemen proprietors went down last summer along with the returns from Fort William, and you will naturally imagine that suspense to hear the result is particularly distressing on the present occasion. Mr. Wentzel also was on the route to Montreal to consult the faculty on account of some illness, and I expect that, by this time, he has been able to pay you his respects. The Gentlemen are adopting every precautionary measures in their power to avert, as much as posible, the evils threatened by these ominous and menacing times; I sincerely wish them success.

We have had reports from Montreal last Spring respecting Mr. Astor's first expedition; that the vessel, after landing some people at the Columbia, had been seized with the people on board, who were all inhumanly murdered. I hope the report may prove false, as innocent mercantile people should above all, I think, demand our pity in these distressing times............

....

I remain

Dear Sir,

Your obliged and humble servant,

GEORGE KEITH.

McKenzie's River Department,
Bear Lake, 19th November 1812.

Rod. McKenzie, Esq.

Dear Sir,

The Country. ....

This Establishment or Post (1) is situated upon the borders and at the west end of Bear Lake. The surface of the country in the environs is level, interspersed, however, with mountainous rocky precipices, and an immense number of lakes of various dimensions. The soil is remarkably barren, of no depth and, in general, a composition of pure sand, crumbly rocks and stones; the best spots afford a mixture of clay with fine sand and moss of a black colour. The country is rather low than elevated, full of marshes and poorly wooded.

The Rocky Mountain. That very extensive ridge of rocks called the Rocky Mountain is almost within sight of this place and lies to the westward, extending nearly from north to south. It forms a number of ridges in some places, but all have a kind of connexion with one another, the intermediate spaces being generally filled up with small lakes, rivers, or plains. The ridges are in general of great height and cut almost perpendicular, furnishing only here and there a very winding and intricate footpath for the Indians to cross over small breaks and small rivers, formed by

(1) Called later "Fort Franklin."

the torrents of melted snow which descend that mountain in the spring of the year.

I have no doubt that several kinds of ore might be found here, if properly explored; the Indians are in the habit of painting their faces with some kind of ore about the size of very fine sand, (something resembling black lead in colour,) which they pick up from various parts of the mountain. Mineral productions.

In the neighbourhood of this place, upon the borders of MacKenzie's river, there are a kind of sulphurous springs which emit a contiuual smoke both in summer and in winter. A little below the surface of the ground about these springs, a kind of strata is discovered resembling coals, which when tried in a blacksmith's fire was found to answer the purpose, but smelt very much of sulphur. There are likewise a few salt springs which produce very fine salt, but, by no comparisons, in such immense quantities as in other parts of the interior, particularly the salt springs of Slave Lake, in the Athabasca Department. Salt springs.

From the account of the soil already given, it cannot be expected that the country should be, in general, well wooded. The white and red fir of a very puny growth are the most abundant, nay, almost the only production of this part of the country. The small quantity of birch, rough and smooth poplar, is scarcely observed, and I understand that this nakedness gradually becomes more apparent the nearer we approach the sea coast by MacKenzie's River. There is no great variety of bush or shrub wood : the willow with another kind of a shrub of a bushy nature are natives here ; the latter attains from two to three feet high at most, and resembles the young hazel. There is another shrub distinguished by the seven barks it possesses, and which does not come taller than the other ; it produces a flower in the month of July, something similar in colour and size to the medicinal camomile flower. Trees and shrubs.

The cold and inhospitable climate in the vicinity of this lake is very unfavorable for fruit. In favorable seasons we find an abundance of crow and whortleberries, the latter of various shapes and sizes ; they receive the flower in the beginning of July, and come to maturity about the 8th September. The Pashaco (?) is likewise a native of the country and very common, with the *atoca*, juniper berry and the *graine d'ours:* (1) all the former come to maturity before the latter which is quite the reverse in other parts of the country. Dye wood or roots are of no variety, there is a small fine root for dying a pale or dirty colour, and another root, something like stick liquorice, with which the Natives make a pretty bright yellow. I have discovered no medical plants, and the Natives make use of none being the growth of the country.

Insects The musquitoes make their appearance about the 15th June and leave us about the end of August, about which time the *brulots* succeed in swarms : their sting is particularly powerful and venemous in this quarter. The horse fly is common ; the field bee and wasp is seldon to be seen.

Birds. This is a poor country for birds ; the thrush, *grive*, and three or four smaller birds of various hues are our only summer visitors, and a small bird, something similar to the sparrow, is the only winter resident, various species of the hawk and eagle or *nonne* (2) in summer. Among water fowls : swans, bustards, grey and wild geese, a great variety of loons, ducks and a few snipes and sea-pluvers, fresh water gulls and cranes. None of these birds make a long stay here, either coming or returning.

No vermin. Vermin is not to be seen at this post, probably on account of the marshy nature of the soil.

(1) *Graine d'ours,* Bear berry, also called *sac à commis,* creeping plant which is smoked, and which the clerks put in their *sacs* ; the clerks alone had those bags.

(2) Bald eagle.

This country is well stocked with reindeer and moose deer, and farther off, the musk buffaloe is numerous ; to hunt these animals, the Natives make use of bows and arrows, and principally snares : those who can afford guns and ammunition, reap peculiar benefit. The musk buffaloe, although very short limbed, is comparatively swift, daring and dangerous. This is a poor beaver country, but there are plenty of martens and musk-rats, with a diversity of foxes, such as red, white, black, silver, crossed foxes : no great number of bears, and those mostly black, with a few brown ; few otters and striped squirrels. Animals.

This country is interspersed in every direction with an almost incredible number of lakes of every dimension, some very large indeed. Bear Lake surpasses them all in this respect. The extent of this immense body of water has not hitherto been ascertained, either by the Natives or the whites. (1) It communicates with MacKenzie's River by a large river that issues from the west end of the lake and disembogues itself into the former at a little more than a day's march in descending the current. Bear Lake.

This river, Bear Lake River, is rapid, but the navigation is not dangerous except for some time during the breaking up of the ice in the spring, which, on account of its amazing thickness along the banks of the river, remains in some places suspended over a great part of the channel for a considerable time after the breaking up of the ice. These immense bodies of ice rise generally to the depth of thirty to forty feet, and are formed during the winter by some kind of mineral springs which by alternately thawing and freezing, accumulate in this manner to a prodigious height, supported by very steep banks. Ice banks.

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(1) " Bear Lake is the largest body of water in this country, and is so very clear that you can see the bottom in twenty fathoms of water. " Journal of A. MacKenzie, Esq., 1805. Ms.

There are a good many small rivers, but of little note ; the Coppermine River passes at about two days march from the south-east end of this lake.

Intense cold.

The climate is very severe, and it needs no comment when I inform you that the ice took upon the lake this year on the night of the 25th October, which, by old residents, was considered as late, and the next morning I saw three Natives, grown up men, cross over from the other side, safe and sound, making a *traverse* of about four miles. In the beginning of May last, the ice upon the lake measured eight feet at places where there was little snow. The navigation, along a shallow shore, opened only on the 5th July for the Company's canoes ; last summer, the ice, after being tossed backwards and forward by the winds and waves, totally disappeared the 1st of August. (1)

I cannot say that the weather varies much in this region ; our heavy north-easterly gales do not continue above a day or two, atmost, at a time, and we suffer most from strong gales and intense frosts during the month of January and February.

Food and health.

This place is reckoned rather unhealthy, both to the whites and Natives ; this proceeds, I imagine, from the principal subsistence which consists of a small fish about the size of a herring very similar to that taken upon Lake Superior, at the Grand

(1) In 1805, Mr. Alexander McKenzie, the partner in charge of the Great Bear Lake Department, determined to extend the trade relations of the company to the Lower MacKenzie District and eventually to those of the "Great river" which had been reported to Sir Alexander MacKenzie as running to the west.

Being desirous to return early so as to be able to reach Fort Chipewyan before the end of August, he left Great Bear Lake Fort,—"Great Bear Lake Castle" as be calls it—on the 17th of June, but found the Bear River so full of floating ice,—some fields being six to seven feet-thick—that he was obliged to delay his departure for several days.

M. McKenzie had to hurry his trip, and returned after having reached Trading River, a few miles from what is now called "Old Fort Good Hope." On his way back,

Portage : it is of an oily substance and becomes rather disgusting, particularly as it is not always prepared and cooked with that delicacy which fish of every kind particularly demand. The Natives are remarkably filthy in dressing their food and indeed in every other respect, hence it is no wonder they are subject to colics, and pains in the stomach and diarrhea. They know nothing of medicinal roots or herbs, so that, except singing or

he left Mr. Charles Grant and a few men to build a fort at Blue Fish River, about sixty miles below the mouth of Bear Lake River.

The following thermometrical report kept at Fort Normand, near the mouth of Great Bear Lake River, was found, with several others, among Mr. R. McKenzie's papers.

" STATE OF THE THERMOMETER

" during the month of January 1810 at Fort Normand, (1) McKenzie's River, north " latitude 64½ per McKenzie's chart,—being the mean of three daily observations."

1810	Date	Below 0	WIND AND WEATHER
Jany	1	22	N. W. Clear
	2	33	S. W. "
	3	32	S. W. "
	4	37	S. W. " 43 at midnight
	5	35	S. W. "
	6	29	S. W. Cloudy
	7	33	S. W. Clear
	8	36	Calm "
	9	23	N. "
	10	20	S. E. "
	11	21	S. E. "
	12	15	S. E. Cloudy, with light snow
	13	20	S. E. " " " "
	14	25	S. " " " "

(1) Fort Norman was near the entrance of Great Bear Lake River into the MacKenzie River.

rather humming their sick, biting and pulling with their teeth, and sucking the parts affected, they allow nature to take her course undisturbed by any internal prescription. When nigh the white people's establishments, they always apply for some medicine, which is always given gratis.

The Red Knives "*Couteaux jaunes*".

The Natives of this post consider themselves composed of three distinct tribes and assume the names of Red Knives, Filthy Lake and Grand River Indians, and the "People of the big or long arrows". The former are few in number, about 15 married men, and claim the term of natives only in consideration of their having frequented this post since its establishment, about the year 1800; their name is derived from the country they originally inhabited or resorted to, the Coppermine River, from whence they procured copper to make knives, &c. This

Jany	15	31	S. E.	Clear	
	16	36	Calm	Clear.	40 at midnight
	17	33	S. E.	"	
	18	30	S. E.	"	
	19	35	S. E.	"	
	20	40	Calm	"	
	21	37	N.	"	
	22	37	Calm	"	
	23	33	N. W.	"	
	24	30	N. W.	"	
	25	32	N. W.	"	
	26	29	N. W.	"	and cloudy with snow at intervals
	27	35	Calm	"	
	28	37	S. E.	"	Strong gales
	29	35	S. E.	"	
	30	37	S. E.	"	
	31	37	S. E.	"	

tribe, I imagine, is a branch of the Chipewyans ; the same manners, customs, and language, with little variation, are common to both

As to their increase and decrease, I think the balance goes very little on either side. The principal reasons for this are, I presume, the barbarity, drudgery and toil to which the women are exposed. The latter, in consequence of such inhuman treatment, cannot be expected to be much attached to hymeneal rights and therefore invite illicit amour, which, when discovered, often bring the fair offender to an untimely grave. When any woman, forced away from a husband of a subordinate tribe, hap pens unfortunately to be with child, the latter is generally brutally cast off or murdered. These women, if they do not escape, live for the most part in abject slavery ; no doubt there are exceptions, but this is their general character from what I know of them. **Abject condition of the women.**

Polygamy is permitted amongst them, and is intended as a means of satiating their passions, and to serve convenience more than to propagate the species. They have seldom more than six children of both sexes. The male sex appears to be predominant, and I presume that the female sex while in infancy are much neglected, in fact women are considered by them in no other light then as slaves, to serve their brutality and propagate the species, a woman in her menses dares not walk in the same foot path with the rest.

They appear to have little idea of morality, in practice at least. That the weak ought to submit to the strong, seems to be a general maxim with them, particularly with regard to their woman (1) ; Other property is more respected. To obtain an **Morality.**

(1) " They often fight for their women, " says Mr. Alexander MacKenzie in his journal ;—unpublished—"the strongest carries off the woman by the hair of the head.

object upon what they regard as fair principles, they will pick a quarrel about something else, which is generally understood, and the parties for the time consider themselves, in outward appearance at least, as good friends.

Religion. The present or rising generation would appear to have some notion of an Almighty Being, but I believe they internally allow him very few of his attributes; no doubt they have improved their ideas in this respect from their communications with the whites. They are in general remarkably superstitious, being able, I am apt to think, to give credit to the grossest absurdities, which are indeed very often imposed upon them by self conceited and talkative people amongst themselves.

Games. They have little variety in amusements: their favorite play is an imitation of our dice, performed in a dish with a few eagle or bears claws; at this game they will risk the fruits of their industry, altho' sparingly at each stake. At other times they will feast, dance or jump and sing around a circle.

Interior economy. They are in general very industrious and very economical. The country affords flesh and fish in abundance, but they prefer the former, and study chiefly to live upon the fat of the land, being remarkably provident and careful of their provisions; the women, altho' they carry or drag the provisions, are very often upon lean and short allowances. Bears flesh being scarce is consequently considered delicate, and the women dare not touch this, as they are told they would die; other kinds of meat are also forbidden, such as the nose of the moose deer, &c. The men also abstain from some parts or pieces of an animal

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Their way of fighting is by pulling by the hair to bring their opponents to the ground, and there he is held until he gives up all claim to the woman. This gives great amusement to the lookers on, who never interfere."

pretending that if they happened to eat such, they would kill no more game afterwards. Their food is in general cleanly prepared and cooked. They make use of the axe or hatchet, butchers knife, crooked knife and *dagues*, with iron trenches for fishing or working beaver.

Their habitations are circular lodges or tents, covered with dressed animals skins, to screen them from the inclemency of the weather, and the fire is made in the middle. Their dress in make is simple, much similar to that of the MacKenzie or Grand River Indians, (1) consisting in winter of carribou dressed skins, with hair on for their robes as well as for shirts and leggins, and their shoes are generally sewed to their leggins. In summer they dispense with the hair of the skin, and their shirts, in particular, are ornamented with coloured beads, dyed porcupine quills, and small feathers of striking or rare colours. But their women are by no means so ingenious or elegant and neat at this kind of work as the Slave women.

Habitations and dress.

They place their dead upon scaffolds, entombed in wood, with all the property of the deceased. The relations cut, bite and scarify the flesh of the body in a shocking manner, and those most nearly related destroy all their property without reserving the most necessary, in order to make a parade of their sorrow for the dead, which in this country is not always free from ostentation. The most distant relations only sacrifice part of their property. The female sex related to the deceased will, every morning at dawn, and again at sunset, bewail and howl him for more than a year.

Extravagant mourning.

They have many leaders, such as fathers of families &c., but very few general ones. To become a general leader requires

Cruel disposition of the Natives.

(1) See Wentzel's letters, page 86. First series.

numerous relations and some address and ability, with personal bravery or, which amounts to the same with them, ferocity tinctured with an inclination to dominate. They are of a very cruel and domineering disposition over the other tribes here, and in their dealings with them pay no regard to honesty, equity and much less to generosity, provided these winning qualities can be dispensed with without they being exposed to consequent retaliation; they are very little exposed to this, except the affair is brought before the superintendent of this post, who, from the influence he possesses generally over the Natives, is enabled to settle any matters of this kind as equitably as possible, and without any disturbance among the Natives. To give this influence, fair dealings, upright and manly behaviour must be observed in his general conduct with the Natives.

THE FILTHY LAKE

AND

GRAND RIVER INDIANS

These Indians, altho' they consider themselves as forming two distinct tribes, may be classed together, because the language, customs and manners are common to both. The origin of their name is doubtless derived from the country they respectively inhabit. They are remarkable for that peaceable and inoffensive dispositon which generally characterizes the Natives of the upper part of Mackenzie's River, and are evidently a branch of the same root, altho' their general character differs in some respects, a circumstance naturally resulting from local considerations which widely differ, and consequently produce various habits and manners of living among the Indians. A better class of Indians.

I shall say nothing of their origin ; my ideas would be very incompetent to determine upon a thing of this nature, which, when ably discussed, must rest principally, I imagine, upon conjecture. At all events, the Natives have no notion of the matter without the range of their occasional peregrinations. The exact number of their population has not been ascertained, as very few of them are seen at this or any other establishment, and they appear very shy or evasive when questioned upon this subject. However, their limited territory, exclusive of other con-

siderations, prevents them from being very formidable in this respect.

Dread of the Red Knives.

Polygamy is countenanced amongst them, yet they very seldom take advantage of this general indulgence, arising perhaps from the difficulty sometimes experienced of supporting a single woman with the offspring resulting therefrom, which I am induced to think amounts in most cases from four to eight chilren of both sexes. This difficulty does not originate from the scanty means afforded by the country, so much as from the want of exertion, the supineness and improvident disposition on the part of the Natives, who urge several reasons in defence of these unbecoming propensities, and insist principally upon the domineering dispositions of their neighbours and frequent visitors, the Red Knives, as the latter very generally make free booty of any little property collected for the purpose of traffic, in order to procure a few necessaries. If the aggressors are resisted, they will force or carry off their women, and it is natural to conclude that, the first being the least of the two evils, the property is sacrificed with the best grace possible. In consequence of this vexation, those most exposed generally sequestrate themselves to some unfrequented part of the country, until such time as they think themselves in less danger.

This injurious and inhuman treatment must operate considerably against an increase of population, and proves likewise to be a check upon the industry. Exiled in a way from their country, they often seek refuge in barren recesses, where the want of necessaries, combined with other causes, exposes them to much hardship.

From the unprincipled conduct of their neighbours, I think they have caught a slight tincture of the same propensities, for it is certain that they act upon the same principles in their dealings with the Big or Long Arrowed Indians, at least those who

resort to this place, as they are inferior in number; those irregularities, I must say, are however seldom carried to any length. They are in other respects, particularly amongst themselves, humane and equitable in most of their transactions, except with regard to their differences and pretensions about women.

Individual property is pretty much respected, although pilfering is sometimes practised and only punished by the obloquy attending the discovery of the theft, and by the restoration of the article stolen. The civilized traders cannot, however, trust too much to their honesty in advancing their wares upon credit, as they very often retard their after visits in hopes of not being recognised later, or plead inability to discharge the debt, which, one way or the other, is often ultimately abandoned. Protection of property.

Their sick and aged are carefully and humanely attended, and the latter are generally entrusted to the youngest son, or the nearest young relation, and the old people bestow the fruits of their industry solely upon their guardians, notably out of gratitude and with a view to indemnify him, as far as lies in their power, for their conveniences inseparable from so heavy a charge.

They have a most confused idea of religion: they do not comprehend, much less acknowledge any thing of a Supreme Power, and yet in the morning before they get up, an old or middle aged man hums or sings an air, which from the tone and manner, appears to me to be a kind of thanksgiving or of grateful effusions for a pleasant night's rest; whether this is the case or not, it always strikes me very forcible to this effect. No words are attached to this air, which is seldom the case with their other songs, excepting the dancing and war songs. Superstition Religion.

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has no hold on this tribe, altho' I think it would not be difficult to impose upon their credulity in this respect.

Individual pre-eminence.

A good hunter or any one endowed with superior understanding and conduct, commands respect and often a kind of preeminence over those few at least who occasionally live with him. Good hunters are seldom to be met with amongst this tribe, and they are consequently justly admired and more particularly with the female sex. A number of men, merely from the indolent habit contracted in youth, are unable to support their lives except as fishermen, in which quality they excel; they also provide fuel for the women and perform any other drudgery of the kind. Bodily strength is likewise a powerful engine, and in youth it is sometimes misapplied in disputes or rather contests about women.

Marriages in tender age.

Since I am upon the subject, it may not be improper to observe that a man can scarcely call a woman his own until such time as he has got a couple of children at least, on account of the frequency of elopements. The mother in general disposes of her daughter generally when very young, (1)—from 10 to 12 years of age—and very often for present convenience, without much regard to the future welfare or happiness of either party; hence it is no wonder that the daughter in riper years should take the liberty sometimes of chosing for herself, in which case she

(1) Theso early marriages were of frequent occurrence in the North-West and were not engaged in by the Natives alone. Canadian *voyageurs* and *engagés* themselves thought nothing of taking, as wives, girls in their most tender age. A M. Michel Curot, a clerk in the X. Y. Company, stationed on Lake Superior in 1803, mentions one of these marriages in these three short matter of course lines of his diary, which speak volumes, and show the scant respect in which those marriages were held by many. *David a pris une jeune fille de 9 à 10 ans pour femme : je lui ai vendu de la marchandise. Il l'a renvoyée pour en prendre une autre plus grande ; je lui ai aussi vendu de quoi habiller cette seconde.* Both transactions on the same day !

seldom meets opposition from her parents, provided the new son-in-law is more industrious and a better hunter.

The children of two brothers, (first cousins) are permitted to become partners in life ; this is the nearest affinity in marriage openly averred amongst them, but it is pretty well known that some fathers do not scruple, although with as much secrecy as possible, to make their daugthers subservient to their brutal lust, the brother with his sister, the brother-in-law, openly with his sister-in-law and so on. Degrees of affinity.

The women are gently treated and have considerable influence over the men ; notwithstanding, they do not scruple to dishonour the nuptial bed, which is sometimes punished by a few stripes, and more frequently with a gentle reprimand, or absence on the part of the offended for a few days or weeks, according to circumstances. All the blame rests generally with the woman although the seducer shows himself as seldom as possible or convenient for a few days. Freedom granted to women.

A considerable portion of their traffic is carried on among themselves, although sometimes at reduced prices from what it might procure at the establishment. The nature of the country which abounds in fish and reindeer and its inland situation, at a distance from the post, and particularly the poorness of the country in furs, beaver especially, leave but small inducements to rouse the natural inactivity of these Indians, who, like most poor tribes, particularly in fish countries, are good economists in every respect excepting in the article of food, of which they are little provident. They live principally upon fish, and are not over delicate in their manner of preparing and dressing it, particularly with their wattap kettles, and very few of the Natives can afford copper or brass kettles of any size suitable for a family. Trade and interior economy.

Winter habitations. During their residence in one place or station,—which upon some occasions lasts weeks and even months, according to the means of subsistance afforded,—they seldom change the pine or fir branches upon the sitting or sleeping places (synonimous terms with them,) in their tents or huts. Their huts, in winter, are generally of an oblong square form, and covered only with fir branches or moss, with a pretty wide space in the middle of the roof as an outlet for the smoke. The square is only about two and a half to three feet high, with an almost flat roof.

Utensils. They need few utensils: a hatchet, ice trench, knife, a copper or wattap kettle, when they have one, exclusive of their fishing tackle. Very few, indeed, have all these, but they borrow from and lend one another. Wooden or bark (birch) dishes are the only vessels they use.

They are no warriors; I am much mistaken if they ever went on a premeditated war excursion. They place their dead upon scaffolds, the corpse is wrapped up with the deceased's property, with other contributions if any, after which several layers of wood are placed upon the body to prevent the wild beasts getting at it. The deceased is generally lamented every morning and evening by the women related to him, but the men seldom mix in this public lamentation after the corpse is entombed. They seldom however, if nearly related, pass near the spot after a long absence without going to pay their tribute to his manes, and generally tear some of their property and leave it there, I am led to think that the women are soon forgetten, at least they pay much less attention to them at their exit. In winter, the corpse lies sometimes several days "unscaffolded," according to circumstances, and a favorite child or boy will often remain eight days, but in summer scarcely twenty four hours.

THE BIG OR LONG ARROWED INDIANS.

It only remains, my dear sir, to see what we have to relate concerning the third and last tribe, called the Big or Long arrowed Indians, who are in the habit, some at least, of resorting to this place for the purpose of traffic.

This tribe inhabits a country to the north of this place ; a country in general pretty regular as to its surface, interspersed with numerous lakes, some of which are of very considerable extent. The soil is as poor, marshy and barren as the other divisions of this country or neighborhood. There are no mountains of any magnitude in this part of the country, which, from all accounts, appears to be pretty extensive. The few I have heard of are principally formed of detached ridges of rocks very destitude of wood. **The country.**

The only large animals inhabiting this part of the world are the Musk buffaloe and the reindeer; the former no doubt derives its name from the smell and taste of musk attached to its flesh, which during the rutting season renders the flesh of the male most disagreable and unpalatable. These animals never leave the rocky ridges of the mountains. The reindeer lives on marshy and mossy ground. **The Musk buffaloe.**

The modes of hunting are the same as those of others Indians around this place, bows and arrows and snares, few of the Natives having guns and ammunition. The most successful months for the chase are those of April, August and the beginning of September, the former on account of the quantity of snow upon the ground which enables the Natives to fatigue **Hunting season.**

them by pursuit ; the latter being the month in which the horsefly is most prevalent, droves of reindeer are forced to take shelter in the lakes in order to avoid that annoying insect. During the other months of the year, the Natives subsist principally upon fish, particularly trout, some of which weigh sixty pounds each, and a large white fish weighing from eight to thirteen pounds.

Intense cold.

The climate is remarkably severe and some years proves fatal to the Natives ; the excessive frosts and long winters dry up the waters in those lesser lakes to which the Natives have recourse for subsistence, as being less exposed to the intense cold more generally prevalent on more extensive lakes.

Diseases.

I am of opinion that the diseases to which the Natives are subject originate principally, if not entirely, from the dirty and loathsome manner in which they cook and prepare their food, particularly fish, which almost surpasses imagination, also to the most intemperate meals they make after being sometimes for a long time on short allowances. The general complaints, in consequence are colics, attended with *gripes*, squeamishness of the stomach and diarrhœa. Their knowledge in medecine does not extend beyond that of the other Indians around this post, and their mode of treating the sick much the same : pulling, sucking, biting the parts of the body affected, pretending to do miracles, such as extracting small fish, frogs, hair, &c (1) ....

The Natives ; their improvidence

This tribe is represented as formidable in numbers and they consider themselves composed of several distinct tribes, from this circumstance probably, that they generally resort by groups to different parts of the country to procure a living. Very few

(1) The same imposition is practiced among the Abenakis of St Francis, Canada. *Note, by Hon. R. MacKenzie.*

of them resort to this establishment, perhaps not more than twenty men, and from this sample at least, I would entertain little hopes of an increase. From the richness of their country in fish and flesh, they might, with a very little attention and industry, command a plentiful supply of food all the year round, instead of which, owing to their improvidence and indolent disposition, they are doomed to starve at least during the four severe winter months every year. I am told, however, that those farther off live better, although I have some grounds to doubt the fact.

They have but a faint idea of morality, which appears but too glaringly in the little concern with which they view the sufferings of their relations, for they seldom assist one another unless it can be done with the greatest ease and convenience. In matters of traffic with us, they are great cheats, being much fonder of acquiring things in this way than of procuring them at the sweat of their brows. The few who, from their vicinity, come easily to the establishment do all in their power by false reports, &c. to hinder their relatives at a distance from reaping the same advantage, and this, with a view of monopolizing the whole trade, in which they have hitherto too well succeeded to the great disadvantage of the latter in many respects. **Ideas of morality.**

They have a most abominable and inhuman custom of exposing or making away with young children, particularly young girls. A few moments after their birth, the barbarous mother will tell you very composedly that she finds it too hard to support so many children, and yet this same woman, if she happens to have any near akin buried, will, every time she passes in the neighbourhood, go alone and visit the place, lament, howl, tear her hair and scarify her body in a dreadful manner, **Infanticide.**

and a few minutes after, will laugh and play as before. They often pillage one another's women, and in many other respects the stronger party does not mind the means provided the object can be obtained.

Religion.

During a residence here of almost two years, I have not been able to discover any seeds of religion amongst them and they appear very little tinctured with superstition, it makes, at least, little impression on them.

Occupation.

They have few amusements, and, upon the whole, appear to be of a very morose disposition. Their principal occupation is fishing, at which they excel quite as much as they are defective in the chase. They are not very industrious but are good economists in every thing excepting the most precious and often scarce article of food, which they cook quite as dirtily as the other Indians around this place.

Their cooking utensils.

Their boilers (their little exertion cannot procure them brass kettles,) are made of wattap, interlaced with willow so closely and neatly that the least sediment, with the swelling of the wood, makes it very tight. Into this vessel, they put the quantity of water required, after which they heat this water almost to a boiling state with stones heated in the fire amongst ashes. The fish, scales and all, is cut up and put into the kettle, and immediately after another lot of hot stones is placed above the fish, and the kettle covered with pieces of wood or bark, and remains so until the stones are cooled, by which time the fish is cooked. The fish is then emptied into a wood or bark dish and often upon worn out fir branches, and then all hands fall to work, scumming now and then the top of the kettle so as to lose nothing of the dirty and oily substance remaining of the soup. When fish is plentiful, it is generally roasted on the ashes before

the fire. Another favorite method of cooking fish is to take a frozen fish and heat it hastily upon the coals until the flesh next to the bones begins to thaw, by which time the fish is esteemed well cooked ; they eat more at a time when so cooked than any other way.

The same poverty, nastiness and sloth distinguish their habitations, which are generally of an oblong square form, entirely built of pieces of wood piled one upon the other until the square is about two or atmost three feet high ; the wood is placed perpendicularly at the gable ends and a little higher than the sides of the hut. All this is enterlaced or covered with the branches and tops of the fir tree, leaving a pretty large space in the middle, the length of the roof, for the smoke, an almost unnecessary precaution, as the smoke would easily find its way anywhere through the many chinks of this miserable and frail building. A hole is left at each end to creep out, and they shut up one and sometimes both in bad weather. The hut being in general no more than eight feet in breadth, with the fire in the middle, it is hard to conceive what misery and inconvenience the inhabitants will suffer. Sometimes a couple of men and women with three or four children will heap themselves up in a diminutive hut of this description. Their huts.

Their covering or dress of course corresponds with their general poverty and nastiness ; it consists in summer of an old carribou dressed leather shirt, a pair of leggins of the same material, and generally an old thread-bare carribou robe for a blanket. They have a new dress of the same in winter, with this difference that the hair is left upon the skin, and with the addition of a *capuchon* sewed to their shirt. In this slight covering, very often defective in size and besmeared with an oily nastiness Dress.

which renders it still less efficient against the cold, they will brave the severest weather upon this extensive and open lake without experiencing the direful effects to which they are exposed. Their dress is seldom susceptible of the least ornament. Those who can afford a double dress in winter will sleep sound upon this open lake without suffering.

Singular dealings among themselves

Those who visit this establishment transfer a few iron works to their relatives farther off, at I do not know how much per cent advance ; those vendors are moreover never satisfied, for so long as the article lasts, and every time the vendor meets with his customer after a few months absence, he always advances new pretentions in order to procure any little property, and if this is refused as injust, he insists upon the restoration of his former property, and one way or the other he often succeeds with his imposition.

Tools.

Their means of supply extend to a comparatively small number, and they fabricate most of their utensils, such as ice trenches, knives, *dagues*, with the *panache* of the reindeer. The hatchet is made of stone pointed at both ends something like a wedge, and attached to a wood handle with a line, all of which, from their frail material and construction, require infinite labour and patience to enable them to perform their several offices. To fell timber with this hatchet they must always chop against the *fil du bois*, and after raising a few splinters, the tree is soon knocked down. It requires much time and infinite address to cut through solid ice six feet thick, with their frail ice trenches without breaking them. The knife and *dague* appear to me the less objectionable of their instruments.

They make use of two pieces of metallic ore, with a kind of spungy substance found upon the bark of the smooth poplar

tree, to make fire. They polish their arrows with beaver teeth, and likewise by rubbing them between two stones. The knife, bow and arrows are the only arms they possess, and the Esquimaux tribes are the only enemy of whom they are suspicious, and it is mere suspicion I imagine.

Like most disunited tribes, they have no leaders of any note or authority amongst them. **No chiefs.**

Although the environs of Bear Lake are not productive of that valuable article, beaver, yet the country is well supplied with martens aud muskrats, with which, with a little industry and conduct on the part of the Natives, the fur trade carried on here might defray the expenses attending it, and confer inestimable advantages on a set of beings, the most miserable the imagination can conceive. The youthful stripling might be as active and as successful as the man of riper years in the pursuit of these small animals. **The trade.**

It is painful that, notwithstanding every possible encouragement held out to the Natives by the Company hitherto, all our endeavours have proved very unsuccessfull, and it remains in the womb of time to determine whether a continuation of such generous policy some time longer, combined with the most powerful motives on the part of the Natives, will arouse their insensibility, and make them feel the good effects to be derived from a communication and traffic with the white people.

About seven years ago, there was a competition between two companies at this place for the trade carried on here with the Natives, but, in consequence of a coalition of interests having taken place, it only lasted one winter. This short contest did not by any means turn out profitable to either party, which indeed it was ill calculated to do, upon the principle it was conducted,

yet it appears to me, without reverting to the issue of that affair, that nothing of this nature could be carried on here to the advantage either of the Natives or traders. It would be the most effectual means of rooting out the few seeds of principles, probity, and industry that the former possess, without in the least bettering their condition as to worldly circumstances.

Bear Lake, 22nd Nov., 1812.

Geo. Keith.

Rod. MacKenzie, Esq.

Forks MacKenzie's River Department,

15th January, 1814.

Rod. MacKenzie, Esq.

Dear sir,

Your very gratifying and obliging favor of the 7th June, 1813, duly came to hand and it is with infinite satisfaction I observe you enjoy health and tranquility in these disastrous times. Since the news of the declaration of war, I have often felt for our friends' situation in Canada, little expecting that our numerous enemy would be opposed so gloriously and so successfully. Altho' we cannot be said to be at open warfare in this unfortunate part of the country, yet our situation is rather critical and as disagreable at least as if we were actually opposing the foe in Upper Canada.

Last winter, we were in a manner struck motionless by the dreadful and altogether unexpected massacre at Fort Nelson in this department. Sorry I am to add that the late Mr. Alexander Henry, with four men, some women and children suffered an untimely and barbarous fate, all having been most cruelly murdered by a strong party of Natives of that Post. No one never entertained the most distant prospect of such an atrocious catastrophe, particularly in that quarter.

Murder of Mr. Alex. Henry.

These are the execrable beings of whom I transmitted you some years ago such an agreable picture ; still we must consider

that they are savages, and, if acting and entirely influenced by the motive of self existence or preservation, as they have subsequently loudly proclaimed, their most heinous crime is, according to their ideas, at least, in some degree palliated. Distress, and perhaps absolute despair for want of ammunition, exclusive of other grievances, must have brought on our awful misfortune.

The deceased, with all his amiable and good qualities, was rather too much inclined to be morose, inconsiderate and of an unfeeling disposition by turns, and his little success in that quarter; in comparison to former times, was little calculated to soften his natural temper. This is one of the characteristic frailties of human nature, we often think we see blemishes in others, while our own innumerable failings lay concealed from our observation.

I need not point out to you our uncomfortable and almost unsupportable situation after so much distress and so many enormous atrocities which we have suffered within a few years. Indeed, unless some strong measures are applied soon to recover in some degree our former respectability, matters must soon come to an end in this Department.

Mr. Wentzel.

I was favored with Mr. Wentzel's Company at this place last fall ; his discourse is more than usually interesting and agreable, which is saying a good deal. What a fund of news ! one thing I like of him, he appears to be very grateful for the generous civilities and noble hospitalities he experienced at Terrebonne and elsewhere. He winters this year at Bear Lake. As I have been talking of news, I must not omit mentioning I had the satisfaction last winter of being favored with one of your sets by our friend, Mr. Simon Fraser, which is the only one I

have seen in the country. Only two sets (private property) have come in this year.

I had the pleasure of sending you a string of remarks and observations from Bear Lake last winter, I wish I could always muster something, were it merely as a pastime, for I do not suppose you can attach very great importance to my dull effusions. I am tempted to mention here a circumstance regarding the Natives here that has hitherto escaped all my enquiries. Confession.

When the men are in violent pain and fearful of dying, they generally must have a confessor or one of their *jongleurs* to whom (as the only means of recovery held out to the patient by the latter,) they publicly unbosom themselves without reserve and declare all their evil doings. Previous to confession, the mystical cord, ornamented with loon necks, stripes of mink and other skins, claws of the eagle and a variety of rare and elegant bird feathers, must be attached across the lodge, a little elevated from the ground ; over this, the penitent occasionally throws himself upon his belly and the juggler embraces this opportunity of singing, sucking, &c, and performing his mystical gestures and incantations, and singing a gentle reprimand at each avowed offence against moral rectitude (1)...... ....

They are remarkably humble and submissive during this ceremony and ordeal. Excuse and pardon all this frivolity and believe me,

Dear sir,

With unfeigned wishes for your

happiness and prosperity,

Your obedient and humble servant,

George Keith.

(1) Unfit for publication.

MacKenzie's River, 4th Feb. 1815.

Rod. MacKenzie, Esq.

Dear sir,

Your obliging and kind favor of the 4th June now lies before me, and I sincerely regret to find that many of your friends in this country have shown a backwardness in contributing to your publication little creditable to themselves.. ....

Subterranean Beings.

I can scarcely think that you intend to go to press in Canada; it is certainly a poor place for such a work as yours will be..

I have some thoughts of sending you an account of a consultation held by a few of the Natives here with those they call subterranean mortal, or in other words, according to their ideas, with the bad spirit, but the account seems to be so much filled with the prophetic and the marvellous, that I would wish to be a spectator of the movements and gestures, &c, requisite to set these lower mortals in motion, before I transmit an account of it. It is pretended that there is only one period in the year (when the snow is almost wholly dissolved in the spring,) when these oracles will deign give responses.

Mr. Fraser's journal.

Your mention of Mr. Fraser's journal being in such a state of forwardness rather surprised me. A year or two ago, I had an indirect hint of his intentions of publishing it, but I hardly

thought it could be moulded in such a manner as to be very interesting to the public. However, this was mere conjecture, for, although my curiosity would probably have been gratified, I did not presume to take the liberty of asking to have a peep at the rough manuscript in his possession.

We have no news here worth mentioning ; the returns these years have unfortunately sunk to such a degree, that one has no pleasure in mentioning them. I hope, however, that they have now reached their lowest ebb. All your friends in this quarter are hearty. Mr. James Stuart after crossing to the Columbia is again returned to his old quarters, New Caledonia. You must have been grieved to hear of Mr. Wentzel's and his people's starvation last year ; they were reduced to short allowances almost all winter, but, by last accounts, I am happy to learn that his situation in every respect is infinitely more agreable this year. His long services and sufferings, one would think, merit considerations, but prejudice and I do not know what, I am afraid, is much against him.

Trade.

Mr. Wentzel.

I hope in your next you will have to congratulate us on a peace having taken place with your unprincipled neighbours ; the conditions, I apprehend, will be a bitter pill to " Brother Jonathan. "

With offer of my humble respects and best wishes to Mrs. MacKenzie,

I am,

Dear sir,

Your very obedient servant,

GEORGE KEITH.

Fort Chipewyan, 25th May 1817.

Rod. MacKenzie, Esq.

Dear sir,

Quarrels with Lord Selkirk.

I had the pleasure of writing you both from Lac La Pluie and Fort William previous to my leaving these places last summer, but I am persuaded my letters have not escaped the rapacious and felonious clutches of the Earl. Little did I dream at that time of such perfidious villany ; I hope, however, that our turn will come, and make His Lordship (how this title is sometimes prostituted) bitterly regret his infamous proceedings. This consideration encourages us to support with some temper our heavy pecuniary losses, and we are chiefly and deeply affected at the loss of our accomplished friend the late Mr. Kenneth MacKenzie. Compensation would make some amends for the former, but no worldly consideration can wipe away the criminal injury sustained in the unfortunate loss of the latter.

Surely, His Lordship has much to answer for both in this world and in the other ; but if he escapes with impunity in this world, he would probably be satisfied, as it does not appear, if we judge by his actions, he much thinks of the other, or he probably calculates on appeasing Charon with a few packs. On the whole, I believe it is the best way to bear the losses and

vicissitudes of fortune with as good a grace as possible. We are not always, however, in this mood, anxiety must sometimes get the upper hand, and during these moments the mind is far from being at ease.

We shall be very anxious to learn the result of affairs at Fort William and elsewhere in the interior, as well as at Montreal, as this plunderer appears to have thrown away the scabbard after having unsheathed the sword.

I would give you some account of the position of affairs in this, your favorite part of the country, but the disorganised state of some parts of the interior little encourages a detail of this kind, suffice it to say for the present that our unprincipled and inveterate O. P's. cause began to decline last summer, and I shall leave you to judge whether our admirable Leader, supported or seconded as he has been, has not done the business for them. During the preceeding winter, including two packs they collected in coming about English River, their returns were scarcely four packs. In short, I trust the prospects of their cause is at an end.

Mr. Clarke brought in 10 canoes ! never did a set of men behave with such imbecility; I am sure they have ten thousand times regretted their engaging against us in His Lordship's mad enterprise. The common *engagés* are, through necessity and ignorance, to be pitied, but I can hardly feel much for their leader.

Our returns have turned out remarkably well in this part of the country, and have been obtained without any additional expence, if we except a large establishment of men on account of the O. P. By last accounts from Mr. Wentzel, I am sorry to state he appears to be in a troubled state of mind. He agreed last fall with the Concern for the term of three years at £200,

per annum, and now he talks loudly of renouncing his agreement and going down to Canada.

Please offer my respectful wishes to Mrs. MacKenzie and family.

With unfeigned respect,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and obliged servant,

GEORGE KEITH.

Mr JOHN JOHNSTON

AN ACCOUNT

OF

LAKE SUPERIOR

1792-1807.

The name of John Johnston is one not easily to be forgotten in the early history of Sault St Mary and of the adjoining country. His high intellect, his romantic and checkered existence, his successes in trade, his generous hospitality, and, above all, the signal proofs he gave of his devotion to the interests of his country, caused his name to be long held in veneration in the neighbourhood of the Sault.

The descendant of a highly connected Irish family, he was, at the age of twenty, and through some unfortunate and unknown circumstances which blasted his hopes and expectations in the Old World, induced to emigrate to Canada, where high protections and numerous recommendations obtained for him a cordial reception.

Lord Dorchester was himself foremost in his protection and introduced him to the Partners of the North-West Company, who were then already at the head of the society in Montreal. What he saw and heard in the intimacy of those bold, enterprising, hard working and successful men, many, like himself, the sons of good families in Europe, but most of whom had begun life

before the mast, forcibly struck his young imagination, and made him feel that idleness and pleasures could never satisfy even the least of a man's ambition, nor give him back that happiness which he had lost. He determined upon seeking his fortune in the wilds of the North-West, more congenial to his frame of mind, at that time ; not, however, under the banners of his powerful Montreal friends, but as an independant trader.

He selected *La Pointe*, on the south shore of Lake Superior, as his first winter home, purchased goods, engaged men and, in the spring of 1792, began in earnest his new life as a fur trader.

Endowed with that high spirit of religion which bore him successfully through life, a melancholic turn of mind and a considerable share of elevated and refined sentiments, the severe and sublime grandeur of our American scenery, whose stern beauties are so lavishly displayed along the shores of Lake Superior, made him cherish his solitude.

One little island in particular, off Potters' Head, fifty miles east of Huron River, had the privilege, as he himself says, " of filling his mind with a pleasing melancholy and a desire for quiet sequestration, where every worldly care and every mean passion should be lulled to rest, and the heart left at full liberty to examine itself, develop each complicated fold, wash out each stain with a repentant tear, and finally become worthy of holding converse with nature, approach the Celestial

Portals and, though at an infinite distance, be permitted a glimpse of its Almighty Sovereign, but our Father and God."

Mr. Johnston named this island "Contemplation Island."

Wabogish, the chief at *La Pointe*, who was a great chief and whose power extended to the Mississipi, had a lovely daughter, the possession of whose hand was the ambition of all the young warriors of the nation. But she was deaf to their entreaties, refused their richest offers, and preferred remaining, she said, with her old father, whom she often accompanied in his excursions around *La Pointe.* In one of these she discovered the large ingot which M. Johnston says so frightened her.

The Indian beauty had often seen the young white trader at her father's lodge, and had, of course, fallen in love with him, while M Johnston, who by this time had made up his mind to settle his affairs in Ireland and reside permanently in this country, thought to himself that single life was most tedious, that the White Fisher's daughter was charming and he asked Wabogish, the "White Fisher," for her hand.

The shrewd old chief was in no hurry to part with his daughter He remembered the sad fate of many of the fair ones whose ambition had been to marry the "white traders", and who had been afterwards abandoned by them when they left the country, and obliged to

become the slaves of common *voyageurs.* He told Mr. Johnston to go back first to his native land, settle his affairs, and on his return, if he still loved his daughter, he would consent to her marriage. M. Johnston, who was sincere in his love, left for Ireland, sold his properties, hastened back to La Pointe and claimed his prize, which he obtained.

The good old chief died a few month's after the marriage, and Mr. Johnston settled definitively at *Sault Ste Marie* where he formed a very considerable establishment with extensive plantations of corn and vegetables, a beautifül garden, a comfortable house, a good library, and carried on an important trade.

Mr. Johnston was leading a quiet and happy life at the *Sault Ste Marie,* dividing his time between his business affairs and the education of his children, when war was declared by the United States against Great Britain, in 1812. One of the first acts of General Brock on receiving the news of the declaration of war, was to order the commander at St Joseph to take immediate possession of Michilimakinac which was at the time miserably defended, the American commander being yet unaware that a state of war existed. The feat was accomplished *sans coup férir* by Captain Roberts with a few regulars and about two hundred *voyageurs,* furnished by the Indian traders in the neighborhood—among whom Mr. Johnston—under the command of

Mr. Toussaint Pothier,—" *le Beau Pothier*, "—who afterwards became a member of the Legislative Council of Lower Canada.

Two years afterwards, in August, 1814, the Americans having determined upon regaining possession of Michilimakinac, a considerable expedition was fitted out for the purpose, and Colonel McDowall, who was then in command of the British troops, relying upon Mr. Johnston's influence on the Indians, applied to him for aid. Mr. Johnston called out about one hundred of his own *voyageurs* and *engagés*, armed and fitted them at his own cost, and sent them off in *bateaux* to the relief of the Fort.

The Americans having in the mean time heard of this, sent out two gun boats to intercept the relieving party, but having missed them, they pushed on to the Sault where they found no one to oppose them. Infuriated at their ill success, they plundered the North-West Company's stores, and set fire to Mr. Johnston's house, stables and other property, which were all burnt to the ground. Mrs. Johnston witnessed the destruction of her home from the woods where she had fled for safety with her children.

The gun boats, after having wreaked an easy vengeance, hastened back to Michilimakinac. The crews were at the assault, which failed, the fort having been relieved in the mean time.

After the war, Mr. Johnston resumed business, but the losses he had sustained had considerably reduced his fortune, and it was only several years afterwards that he received compensation from the British Government for his losses.

A few years afterwards, Mr. Johnston once more visited his native land, accompanied, this time, by his wife and his eldest daughter, a young lady of surpassing beauty. Every inducement was offered to them to remain in the "old country," the Duke and Duchess of Northumberland having even offered to adopt their daughter. They preferred, however, returning to the shores of Lake Superior, where Miss Johnston was married to Mr. Henry Schoolcraft, the United States Indian agent at *Sault Ste Marie* and the distinguished author of the "History of the Indian Tribes of the United States."

Mr. Johnston died at the *Sault*, in 1828. (1)

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(1) See Mr. Kingsford's interesting article on Mr. Johnston in the "Dominion Monthly" of July, 1881.

Montreal, 21st September 1809.

Dear sir,

Herewith you have the account of my voyage from St. Mary's to *Fond du Lac* (1) and the superficial observations I have made on the lakes Huron and Superior and the adjoining country. I had proposed to add the little that has come to my knowledge of Indian life and manners, my ideas with respect to their migration from the Old Continent, and to have concluded with a sketch of the fur trade, but feeling myself at present inadequate to the task, I leave it to hands better able to do justice to the subject.

What I here submit to your inspection will require your friendly indulgence and correction. I leave it entirely at your disposal, and beg leave to remain with sincere regard,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,

JOHN JOHNSTON.

ROD. MACKENZIE, Esq.

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(1) In 1792.

AN ACCOUNT

OF

LAKE SUPERIOR

The Fall of St. Mary's is the only apparent outlet for the redundant waters of Lake Superior, the vast extent of which—being more than twelve hundred miles in circumference,—makes it very problematical how it can answer the purpose, especially when it is considered that innumerable streams and many rivers, nearly as large as the Fall, pour their waters in that great inland sea ; but I may have something further to say on this subject when I come to speak more particularly of the lake and the quality of its waters.

The fall is about half a mile of length and a mile in breadth, including the islands on each side. On the farthest stream, on the north side, the North-West Company have a fine saw mill, and also several houses and stores for the reception of their goods from Montreal, their vessels coming to anchor within three hundred yards of the *quai.*

The goods are carried over the portage, which is half a mile in length, (1) and deposited in a store from whence they are

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(1) Mr. Douglas Brymner, the Canadian Archivist, truly says, in his report of 1886 that the history of the construction of a canal on the Canadian side of *Sault Ste Marie* is most obscure. It is, indeed, very singular that Mr. Johnston, who lived at the *Sault,* should make no mention of its existence ; his statement, on the contrary, would lead

conveyed in *bateaux* to the vessel which transports them to Camanitisquia, their chief settlement on the north-western extremity of the lake.—The meaning of the word in the Chipeway language is " River of difficult entrance."—It is about one hundred leagues from St. Mary's.

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to the belief that, in 1809, the year during which his " account " was written, no canal existed, and that the goods and furs of the North-West Company were still " carried " over the portage.

As early as 1796, the partners of the North-West Company, with the aid of the members of the firm of Forsyth, Richardson and Company, who had been, for several years previous, carrying on an extensive fur trade on the north shore of Lake Superior, determined to construct a road forty feet wide on the north side of the Sault, to take the place of the old portage, and an exploration of the route was made during the spring of 1797.

In the mean time, however, the agreement which had been entered into by the Canadian traders after the death of Mr. Ross, in 1787, having expired, several members of the North-West Company entered into partnership with Messrs Forsyth, Richardson and Company, and went into competition against their old associates, who then determined to prosecute the work alone.

Without losing a moment, the Old Company asked for a concession of the land required, and, with that rapidity of decision and execution which at all times distinguished that company, they set immediately to work, without even waiting for the result of their application, and not only completed the road but also built a canal, which was, certainly, open to navigation by the summer of 1800. Harmon, at the date of the 30th of May, 1800, says in his journal : " Here,"—at Sault Ste Marie—" the North-West Company have built locks in order to take up loaded canoes, that they may not be under the necessity of carrying them by land to the head of the rapid, for the current is too strong to be stemmed by any craft."

The New North-West, or X Y Company, claimed the right of using the canal in common with the Old North-West Company, under the pretence that it was built upon public property. The latter, on the other hand, contended that they had an exclusive right to the improvements created by their own industry, and stated that so long as tolls were not paid by outsiders, sufficient to cover the cost of their improvements, they would oppose their making use of them. They did so effectually until the amalgamation of the two companies, in 1821, which put an end to the dispute.

The active and enterprising spirit displayed by the North-West Company in this as well as in many other instances, leads to the belief that, had in not been for their quarrels with Lord Selkirk, and had they not amalgamated with the Hudson Bay Company in 1821, the opening up of a line of communication between Canada and the North-West Territoires, and, consequently, the settlement of that country from Canada, would have been advanced by a quarter of a century. The interests of the North West Company were intimately bound with those of Canada, while the interests of the Hudson Bay Company were in an entirely opposite direction. A few years only after the coalition, the trade of the North-West with Canada was completely destroyed.

The company have been obliged to establish themselves there from an idea that their original settlement at Grand Portage was within the American boundaries, though it is sixty leagues to the north of the extreme end of the lake. The express words of the treaty are, that the middle of the navigable rivers and lakes should be considered the line of separation, a line drawn with a degree of absurdity and ignorance hardly to be conceived, and which has wantonly given away several thousand leagues of the richest fur country to which the Americans had no more right than they had to the Province of Bengal.

But, to return from a painful digression; the rapid — for properly speaking it is not a fall—runs over a bed of red free stone, interspersed with large white stones and rocks of coarse granite. White fish fishery.

The eddies formed around the rocks are the best places for taking the white fish ; this is done with scoop-nets, fixed to a pole and bent so that the circle to which the net is attached can be brought to lie flat on the bottom. The man in the bow of the canoe lets the net drop right over the fish, and the steersman gently lets the canoe descend, then the fisher gives his net a sudden turn, and hauls it up close to the canoe, and proceeds to push up against the stream to the same pool, if he sees any have escaped, or else pushes off to another.

As some of these pools are more frequented than others by the fish, ten or twelve canoes are sometimes seen in a line waiting their turn for a cast, and so great is the quantity of fish that they all return with a plentiful cargo. The greatest haul I have known was fifteen, which requires great strength and address to get aboard without losing any, or over turning the canoe.

The fish are from five to ten pounds weight, and, when in season,—which is from May to November—are the richest and best flavoured ever found in fresh water. They cure as well as cod, and are the chief support of both the Indians and white people here.

The situation of the village is pleasing and romantic ; the ground rises gently from the edge of the river, the houses, if they merit that name, are scattered irregularly over the ridge, to within four hundred yards of the fall. The turf is covered with sweet grass and white clover, which, from its constant verdure, gives a lively air to the scene.

The soil. The soil immediately about the village is light mould and sand, from twelve to eighteen inches deep, over a bed of clay, cold and sterile until exposed to the weather for a season, when it crumbles into fine mould, and helps to improve the surface. Those who go to the trouble and expense of inclosing and draining have as fine oats and vegetables as any in the world. I have seen several ears or heads of wheat and oats which had fallen into the garden by accident come to perfect maturity.

At two miles below the falls the river divides into two branches ; that to the north is the navigable or ship channel, between which and the south, or canoe channel, there is a line of island covered with maple, birch, oak, ash and pine, bordered with extensive meadows of natural grass.

From the little rapid which is the head of separation between the ship and canoe channels, the latter takes its course south-west for five leagues to the rapid called Nibith, the whole extent of which, on the river edge and back, is covered with maple and is one continued meadow of the richest soil, I ever saw. It is intersected with little runs of water at every three or four miles, until you come to the last and largest, called Methcoutisagué River, where a band of Indians have their gardens, and

where, about half a mile up the creek, there is a capital fall for a mill.

The distance from St. Mary's to Fort St. Joseph is thirteen computed leagues, and from thence to Michilimakinac, fifteen...

....

The river above the fall has nothing remarkable for two leagues, until you arrive at Pine Point,— *Pointe-aux-Pins*, — which is a sand bank of several miles, and covered with red and white pine, the best of which have been cut down and used by the North-West Company for building their vessels (1). The river here takes a northerly direction for three leagues, where it terminates, to the right, in a high and round mountain of solid rock, called by the Indians the "Metal Toad," and to the left, by an equally high mountain covered to the summit with trees, and called *Pays Iroquois*, from a band of that nation having been cut off there by the Chipeways, on whom they had come to make war. *Pointe aux pins.* *Pays Iroquois.*

At the foot of Iroquois Mountain and on the beach, was found a large piece of silver ore, which was given to Captain Norlesk (2), who then commanded at Mackinac. It was sent to London and found to contain 75 % of pure silver. However no research Silver ore.

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(1) The "Athabaska" was one of the first—if not the first—schooners built at *Pointe-aux-Pins* by the North-West Company. It was soon found too small for their ever increasing trade, and, in 1793, a larger boat, called "The Otter," was built at *Pointe-aux-Pins* by a Mr. Nelson, and was destined to sail between *Sault Ste Marie* and *Grand Portage.*

The *Athabasca* was later floated down the falls to do service with the "Beaver", another of the company's boats between the Sault, Michilimakinac and Detroit, &c., for the transportation of such goods and furs as were sent by the lakes, but the greater part of the trade was carried on through French River and the Ottawa River to Montreal.

(2) Alexander Henry calls him Norburg, a Russian gentleman, and says he held a commission in the 60th Regiment.

has ever been made for the mine, which perhaps is not far distant.

Lake Superior washes the base of these, its strong and natural barriers, from the summit of which the view is grand, extensive, reminding us at once of Calpe and Ceuta, and only wanting a poet to erect them into " Pillars " and make them the boundary of some hero's travels. The distance between the capes may be a league and a half. You have a view of the north side of the lake for ten or twelve leagues from the entrance, the mountains exhibiting the greatest variety of form until the view terminates in that called the " Paps " (1), which towers sublime in height and beauty over its subject hills.

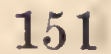
Ile Parisien. About three leagues from the entrance of the lake, and a little inclining to the north side, is *Ile Parisien*, remarkable for a marsh near its south-western extremity, the water of which is so strongly impregnated with iron that it cannot be used for common purposes.

Cap Iroquois. Cape *Iroquois* is of difficult access to canoes on account of a rocky shoal which surrounds it; but there is a little island off the westermost point, where there is a pretty good landing. The ridge of mountains of which the cape is the north-eastern termination retires gradually from the lake, leaving a fine sandy beach. The soil, or rather the sand, rises abruptly from eight to ten feet and is covered with pine and cypress for half a league, until it joins the rich soil, where the sombre forests are changed for the gayer maple, beech, birch, poplar, &c.

The mountain here suddenly approaches the lake, and in the space of three leagues throws out four or five projecting points of freestone, studded around with common rocks, but chiefly,

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(1) *Le Pape*, most probably.



of course, granite, the stratum of freestone extending itself indefinitely under water.

From these points you cross a large bay to River Jackwaminan, the approach of which is very difficult, the channel often shifting its place, and the water so black that you cannot see the bottom in a circumference of three or four miles, though seldom more than eighteen inches or two feet deep. Dark tinge of the water.

It is very remarkable that all the rivers on the south side of the lake have their waters tinged as black as if their source was from turf bogs. The leaves and other vegetable matter which fall into them are not a sufficient cause for this, but I fancy the soil in land has actually acquired the nature of peat from the accumulation of vegetable matter in the course of ages. There are many advantages which should induce farmers to settle here ; the soil is excellent, very little under wood and large improvable meadows. There is a fall about three leagues up the river where in spring you may take any quantity of sturgeons.

From hence to the extremity of White Fish Point, the distance is five leagues ; the land, low and sandy, has been apparently recovered from the lake, as the sand banks are in regular ridges, with hollow spaces between as if each in its turn had been a beach. White Fish Point.

The point runs out in a northerly direction and has the mountain called "The Paps," nearly opposite, which is the last part of the northern shore to be seen from the south side, a distance of fifteen leagues. The point takes its name from the quantity of white fish that surround it every spring and autumn.

Two leagues from White Fish Point, in a south-westerly direction, is Vermillon Point, so called from a quantity of cinnabar being found near the surface of the earth.

Grand Marais. From the White Fish Point to *Grand Marais*, or the Great Marsh, the distance is fifteen leagues, the course nearly south by west. The beach all the way is nothing but sand and gravel, and the bank, which is from twenty to fifty feet high, is a continual line of firs of different kinds.

About thirty years ago, the *Grand Marais* was really what its name indicates; a little river ran through it which scarcely admitted of canoes, but it is now a beautiful basin of water upwards of a league around, very deep in the middle ,but rendered useless by a gravel bank which bars the entrance; tho' it has some times from four to six feet of water, I have often seen in several places the gravel thrown up two or three feet above the water. The entrance is very remarkable, having a high sandy bank to the north-east and an equally high bank of clay to the south-west. It is at least half a league over, and is always deepest at the south-west point.

Above the clay bank there is a fine maple grove, which runs nearly south, but narrows off to the south-west, where it is lost in a deep fissure, the sides of which are covered with pine and cedar.

The Sandy Mountains. On climbing up the opposite side, you are struck with wonder on finding yourself on a sandy plain several leagues in extent, the side of which, fronting the lake, is from one hundred to two hundred feet high, and nearly perpendicular. This plain terminates inland in a lake of extremely black water which has no outlet but a little rill that passes through the fissure above mentioned.

While rowing along the front of this precipice you see sand and stones at every instant rolling down, yet the beach never increases in breadth nor height. There are two or three crevices in a distance of two leagues where people could save themselves in case of a sudden storm, but you must inevitably lose your

canoe. This apparently immense line of sandy mountains is, upon inspecting the several crevices made in its front, found to be a strong loam or clay, the surface of which is pulverized by the intense frosts of the winter and the often no less intense heat of the summer.

The Indians have many superstitions with respect to this mountain which, with every other remarkable or dangerous place on the borders of the lake or interior country, has its Genii, to whom they never fail to make a speech, accompanied with a present of tobacco and sometimes their silver ornaments, whenever they pass. Superstitions.

The Negouwatchi, or Sandy Mountain, is the scene of many of their fairy tales, some of which are very pretty and attended with a moral, and others equally absurd and childish, but all tending to prove their Tartar or Arabian origin, especially those relating to the creation and deluge (1).

The Sandy Mountain is terminated by a point of red and grey freestones which projects nearly a mile into the lake, and is surrounded with rocks, chiefly under water, these would make the doubling of the point very dangerous to canoes but for the extreme clearness of the water, by which you are enabled to see them in time to avoid a disaster. The waters of Lake Superior.

There is not perhaps on the globe a body of water so pure and so light as that of Lake Superior. It appears as if conscious of its innate excellence: the innumerable tainted streams which pour into it are forced to creep merely along the beach without once being able to make an impression on its unstained bosom.

There is no better proof of its lightness than the manner in which it becomes ruffled by the slightest wind. When a gale

(1) See J. H. Kolh, "Kitchi Gami" or Wanderings around Lake Superior.—D. Cameron and Peter Grant.

blows from the opposite shore, it has been known to raise the water several feet some hours before its arrival. This is more particularly noticed at the Fall, where it often rises two or three feet in as many minutes, and this rising is always succeeded by a north-westerly wind.

There is certainly a slow but periodical rising and falling of the lake, in no way affected by external circumstances yet discovered, but it has not had that attention paid to it the phenomenon merits. (1) The old inhabitants say the term is seven years, but of this there is no positive proof.

The *Portails* or *Façades.*

The beach from the last mentioned point is much lower than the Sandy Mountain, being seldom more than twenty to thirty feet above the level of the water, but at the *Portails* or *Façades* the coast turns more to the west and begins gradually to rise to at least two hundred feet. The rock is white freestone, perfectly perpendicular and, in a distance of three leagues, has three little bays nearly at equal distance, and as if placed by the hand of Providence to ensure safety on a coast otherwise not to be attempted in hardly any season.

About half a league from where the rocky coast forms an angle with the sand beach, there is a pretty waterfall which breaks from amongst the trees and tumbles in foam down the side of the rock for about sixty feet. The projection then becomes greater, and about twelve to fifteen feet from the base, collecting its scattered force, it pours the contents of its little urn perpendicularly into the lake.

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(1) Captain Bayfield, in his " Outline of the Geology of Lake Superior ", denies the existence of any periodical risings of the lake beyond those caused by the melting of the snow in the spring of the year, which was more or less considerable according to the severity of the winter. The contrary is only supported, he says, by vague reports of old traders, which cannot be substantiated.

I once passed here in the month of May, immediately after a gale of wind which had continued for four days, with severe frost and snow from the north. The effect on tbe fall was beautiful. It was frozen up entirely except a little gutter in the middle, not more than a foot wide. The sides resembled pillars variously fluted ; the shrubs at the mouth of the rivulet were perfect figures in ice, which appeared like Corinthian capitals. A young pine about thrity feet high which grew in the middle of its bed, and sparkling like a conical pillar of crystal sculptured in fret work, crowned the brilliant perspective.

Not far from the fall is the first of tbe little bays or recesses, the bottom of which is a reef of smooth rock, intersected with many crevices or fissures, the bottom of some of which I could not find with an oar. It is very shallow for some distance out, and never resorted to except in case of absolute necessity.

From Freestone Bay, the rocks assume a still loftier appear- Pictured rocks.
ance. The several strata from which exude different mineral waters, tainting the white smooth freestone with innumerable grotesque figures in a variety of drapery, are easily distinguished. This, with the summit of the precipices crowned with lofty maples, every shelf and vein filled with shrubs and evergreens, sometimes in festoons, and at others spreading like hanging gardens, makes a piece or scenery scarcely to be equalled in the world.

The second recess now opens before you, agreably relieving the eye by the soft contrast from stern grandeur to rural simplicity...

....

Shortly after leaving the second recess you perceive a cove, the mouth of which is finely arched and slanting longitudinally towards the Bay. I have never had time nor inclination to explore it, nor have I heard of any who had.

The point you have now to double shoots out with great asperity ; the height cannot be less than two hundred feet. On the top are several large stones and some noddy trees which equally threaten destruction. The mould being torn from above them by frosts and storms, they appear as if ready to tumble at the least motion, and, in fact, hardly a spring passes but some of them do come down with the thaw.

The base of this point is curious from the manner it is perforated, which resembles bowls turned down and others set upon their bottom, the interstices giving you the idea of porches and gothic windows, the water rushing in and regorging from them in a manner that by no means invites to close inspection, except when the wind is off the shore, or else during a dead calm.

Miner's Bay.

There is nothing remarkable from this point to the third and last bay but the ruins of a once magnificent natural arch, under which canoes used to pass, full sail ; it is now a confused heap of freestone slabs, which may be had of any dimensions, the grit being excellent for grindstones.

Mining operations, 1772.

This last recess is called " Miner's Bay. " Some efforts have been made here, as well as in several other places on the borders of the lake, about thirty-six years ago, to find copper and silver mines, by one Baxter, who was employed by the then Duke of Richmond and several other noblemen and gentlemen. The enterprise failed by the villany of the person employed, who, by feeding the men on Indian corn and grease, (1) and selling them every necessary at an enormous price, made a considerable sum of money. The only revenge in the power of the workmen was to work little and carelessly. It is even believed here up

(1) These were the rations given to the *Voyageurs* and *engagés* of the North-West Company around Lake Superior. *Folle avoine* was often substituted for Indian corn.

to this day that when they found veins of metal they concealed them. Such has ever been the conduct of the low and ignorant. Had they, on the contrary, done their duty faithfully, it would have been in their power to have brought the scoundrel to justice, and to have recovered from him the price of their time and labour.

After you leave Miner's Bay you double a point nearly similar to the last described, except that there is a little natural arch through which you can pass in a small canoe. Grand Island is now opposite to you; it stretches almost due north into the lake, and is about nine leagues in circumference. The soil is excellent and the timber chiefly beech and maple. Grand Island is the summer residence of a small band of Indians, who cultivate maize, potatoes and pumpkins. Grand Island.

From the last point of the cascades, the rock continues nearly of an equal height for half a league, then recedes in the form of an amphitheatre, surrounding Grand Island Bay, which is completely landlocked, and forms the largest and safest harbour upon the lake. The entrance is from the north-east; the island must be kept close on entering the bay, to avoid a sandy shoal which begins where the cascades terminate, and runs nearly a mile right into the channel, but is easily avoided, as part of it is above water.

The bay is at least four miles in circumference, the land gently rising from the water edge and terminating in a chain of mountains from which the cascades is a projection; and surely if ever Milton's description of "shade above shade a woody theatre" was realized, it is here.

There are two rocky islands in the middle of the western channel which communicate with the main land by a reef, on which there is not more than three or four feet of water, and perclude all entrance of vessels from that quarter.

The south end of Grand Island is low and sandy but covered with herbage ; on it, and on the adjoining hill, the Indians have their huts. The bay is directly opposite where they go spearing every calm night with *flambeaux*. They take as fine trout and white fish as are found in any part of the lake.

....

Dead River.

The coast from Grand Island to Carp River, which is twelve leagues, is only remarkable for a constant change of rugged freestone points and sandy bays, each of which has its little river to which the Indians give a name, though the greater number will not admit of a loaded canoe, being choked at the entrance with banks of sand thrown up by the lake, and they are seldom navigable more than three or four leagues, even for small canoes...

About four miles from the river, is the peninsula which projects north-east and is curious from being one half freestone and the other basalt. The Indians find in the fissures of this last a black substance not unlike limestone, which, when pounded, they put in a small bag and boil with any stuff they wish to dye black ; the colour, however, is not bright, though lasting ; the same quantity will serve many times without any apparent diminution of strength.

About two miles east of the peninsula, there are several high rocks where the Indians say there is copper. I visited them last year and found them very different from any I had hitherto seen, they having in many places the appearance of metal. The neck of land, or rather sand, which joins the peninsula to the land exactly resembles that behind White Fish Point, and has been no doubt gained from the lake in the same manner.

At the union of the neck with the main land there issues a torpid stream, called " Dead River ", some miles above the en-

trance of which the Indians cultivate a little maize ; but of the soil there is little to be said as it is thinly scattered among the rocks, and would hardly afford a few acres in any one spot......

....

It is to be remarked that the metallic rocks of the peninsula are the only ones in the whole circuit of the lake which have neither trees, shrubs or vegetation of any kind growing on them, though many others, not near so high and equally devoid of soil, are almost covered with stunted pines. This, the mineralists may account for as they please, but I found on them what was more acceptable than any vegetable : a quantity of sea gulls eggs which were as large as those of turkeys and which, when fried in the pan with some pork, made an excellent supper, with a dish of aromatic tea.

About three leagues from the peninsula there is another which, though much smaller, is worthy of notice. It is joined to the land by a narrow strip of sand and freestone ; the head, which is not more then a hundred yards in diameter, is one half freestone and covered with trees, the other, on the extreme end, is basalt as smooth as glass, and has, as elsewhere, a great depth of water around it.

When you double the headland, you arrive at a fine sandy bay and a small river of clear water which meanders through a considerable extent of meadow. In the bed of the river, I found a part of one of the earthern pots used by the Indians before they had the use of copper and tin kettles. It is the only specimen of the kind that I ever saw, and a ruder attempt at pottery, I believe, was never seen. Potter's Bay.

From Potter's Bay to Huron River is twenty computed leagues, in which space the beach is either semi circular islands or bold projecting freestone points, the stone mostly of a brick colour. Huron river.

Off one of these points the rock runs under water a great way out, and it appears as if a vast number of silver pieces, from the size of a dollar down, were scattered over the bottom. The depth is not more than four to six feet and, when the water is calm, the deception is complete...

....

I must not forget that off Potter's head, about four leagues out, in a northerly direction, lies a small island, apparently round and pretty high, which, when looked at from the shore in a calm clear evening fills the mind with a pleasing melancholy and a desire for a quiet sequestration, where every worldly care and every mean passion should be lulled to rest, and the heart left at full liberty to examine itself, develop each complicated fold, wash out each stain with a repentant tear, and finally become worthy of holding converse with nature, approach the Celestial Portals and, though at an infinite distance, be permitted a glimpse of its Almighty Sovereign, but our Father and God.

Contemplation Island.

When I made my first voyage in the lake, which is now fifteen years ago, I tarried opposite Contemplation Island, as I called it, for four days, and I recollect having filled ten or twelve pages of my journal with reflections, remarks and some poetical effusions, the result of so much spare time. ....

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From Huron River, the course is south-west, along a sandy beach for a league to a bay or rather a gut of the same name, which is not quite a league over at the entrance ; the bottom is rocky, with from ten to fifteen feet of water. The gut runs in a direction nearly south and is, I think, more than four leagues in length, the water deep and clear. The bottom of the gut approaches so near the bay of Keeywaynan that you can hear the report of a gun across the ridge of a rocky mountain which

separates them, but it grows broader towards the lake, where it terminates in a flat point partly basalt and partly freestone.

On doubling this point, you enter the Bay of Keeywaynan, which is four leagues broad at the entrance, and continues of nearly the same breadth for three leagues, and then narrows gradually to the end, which is a circular bassin of about a league. The mountains from behind Huron River bend back towards the south as if to make way for the two bays, and then wheeling around to the north form the tongue of land called by the French *L'Anse* and the Indians " Keeywaynan ", or " the way made straight by means of a portage. " *L'Anse,* Keweenan Bay.

From the bottom of the bay to the extreme point of the tongue, is at least fifteen leagues, and the general breadth not less than five. About three leagues from the entrance af the bay there is a small peninsula which, when doubled, takes you in a basin of two miles in circumference which can hardly be excelled for beauty and safety. The soil is very fine on the peninsula, and here the Indians have a summer village and cultivate some maize.............................. ....

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Off the extreme point there is an island, two or three miles from the shore, which the vessels generally approach from Camanistiquia, and near the entrance of the bay there are two small islands around which there is good anchorage, which enables a vessel to hold what she has already made, in case of a north-easterly gale.

The peak of Nipagon, which projects considerably into the lake, and is exactly opposite the Keeywaynan, forms a kind of strait, and is the narrowest part of the main body of the lake, not being more than thirty or forty leagues over. From Grand Island to Michipaquaton, on the north shore, it is at least eighty

leagues broad and about thirty leagues to the south-west of Keeywaynan. From the Porcupine Mountain, of which I shall speak shortly, to the bottom of the Great Black Bay, which approaches the Hudson's Bay territory on the opposite side, the distance cannot be less than one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty leagues.

The greatest length of Lake Superior is reckoned from Metal Toad Cape to what the French call *Fond-du-Lac*, which I am certain is not less than one hundred and fifty leagues. When to this vast surface is added the unrivalled purity of its water and its great depth—which was tried by the Captain of the North-West Company's vessel off the *Pique*, in 1793, with six hundred fathoms of cord, but no bottom,—it must be allowed the superiority over all the inland waters yet discovered.

Mirage.

But, to return to the Anse ;............................ .... And here again I cannot help digressing to attempt the description of a phenomenon which, though perhaps common, was to me new and beautiful.

One fine evening, in the month of May, 1803, I was doubling a long and rocky point which leads to Huron River, where I intended encamping for the night; the sun was nearly settled and just gilded the skirts of the Keeywaynan Mountains with its horizontal rays, tipping the tops of the trees in the lower part of the ridge with burnished gold. I made my men rest for a few minutes on their oars, that I might indulge in the brillant spectacle. As the rays of the sun became fainter, I saw the trees on the skirts of the mountains, even to the extremity of the point, all in apparent motion and manœuvring like an army attempting to gain a position. Soon after, the mountains began to rise, each retaining its proper form, the valleys, though high in the air, still kept their humble distance from the hills ; among the real trees a few scattered rays of the immerging sun were still per-

ceptible. At length, the majestic edifice graduably descended, and to the air built fabric succeeded a general blush which tinged the whole horizon.

When the vapours rise suddenly from the hills and are dissipated in the air, a storm is shortly expected, but when they descend, warm and calm weather is generally the result.

The Portage River is three leagues from the bottom of the bay, and in clear weather is seen from the opposite shore. The *traverse* is allowed to be three leagues, and is never safe either with a southerly or easterly wind, as the first may blow you into the lake, and the second sends in a swell, often too heavy for loaded canoes.

I have some reluctance in relating an accident which twice happened to my watch nearly in the middle of this *traverse*, as it appears to have some thing of the marvellous in it. However, so it is that, in June 1792, I took it from my pocket to see the time, and it became instantly deranged, running down the whole chain in less than a minute. I sent it down to Montreal and got it up the ensuing year, and it again played me the same prank in the same place. Now, whether this was merely an accident, or was owing to same powerful magnetic influence I cannot say.

Accident to his watch.

The river empties itself into a small bay, and has a large sand bank some hundred yards from the entrance. The beach of this bay is strewed with a great variety of stones ready shaped for sharpening scythes and carpenters tools ; they are of different figures, and some of them of a very fine grit. You ascend the river for two leagues ; at some distance from the entrance, it divides into three branches, the middle one of which is the shortest and leads you to a lake of perhaps three leagues in circumference, the water of which is extremely black and abounds with sturgeon. The land is extremely high all around

it and, towards the south-western extremity, a small band of Indians have their garden grounds on an elevation of at least sixty feet above the level of the lake, in as rich a soil as I ever saw.

This lake narrows away to the westward, where you enter a little marshy lake about a mile long, at the farthest end of which you have to draw your canoe through the mud, at the risk of having the men mired up to the neck. Here you have to discharge and carry every thing through the mire for more than a mile; the ground then rises and you have a fine sandy path to the other end of the portage. Near this portage, the Indians have often found pieces of virgin copper of the purest kind.

At the end of the Portage the bank is at least forty feet above the lake, and is a mixture of sand, gravel and clay; the beach is covered with round whin-stone or paving stone. Here you have again a full view of the blue expanse of water, rendered still more pleasing after having emerged from hills and muddy streams.

Notonagan River.

The coast now bends to the south for more than twenty leagues, with the exception of four or five rocky points which project northwesterly. Here are several rivers, none of which are remarkable till you arrive at the Notonagan, which is fifteen leagues from the Portage, and is larger and deeper than any other we have hitherto spoken of.

The beach at its entrance is low and sandy, but the banks soon rise very high, and are of a stiff red clay, which tinges the water for a quarter of a mile out. This is the only river on the south shore, for one hundred and forty leagues, which does not flow black waters. A short distance from its entrance, the river has a branch coming from the south, but the main river descends from the south east, and about five leagues up this branch, there

is a mass of copper ore in its bed where the Indians go and cut off pieces with their axes, when they want it........................ Copper ore.

In 1792, I arrived at the latter end of May, at Notonagan from La Pointe (where I had wintered,) just as a Mr. Perreault (1) a very ingenious trader descended the river. He had wintered twenty days' march up in the country, though the distance was not perhaps forty leagues, the river being unnavigable the greater part of the way, which leaves no alternative but carrying the canoes, goods and provisions. J. B. Perreault.

This is done by means of leather straps or thongs the middle of which is broad and fitted to the forehead of the carrier. The first bale or piece is tied so as to lie a little above the *reins*, the second is lifted over the head and deposited, without tying, on the first, and thus loaded, the *engagés*, as they are called, trot off to the place chosen for a deposit, which they call a *pose*, and which, in large portages, are from two to three miles apart. This they repeat till the whole is transported, they then set off for the canoe, which they carry on their shoulders. They so go on till night, only stopping once for their meal, and once or twice for lighting their pipes. The packs are from eighty to one hundred and twenty pounds weight (2), and he is not looked upon as " a man " who cannot carry two; there are many who even take three and outrun their fellows. This is the mode of carrying all over the North-West, to the southward they use horses. Carrying in the portages.

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(1) Mr. Jean Baptiste Perreault, the author of a very interesting account which Henry Schoolcraft translated and inserted in his great work, "The History of the Indian Tribes of North America," under the title of "Indian Life in the North-Western Regions, in 1783."—Vol. III. pages 353-359.

Schoolcraft speaks of Mr. Perreault as a man of a good education, happy memory and great urbanity. After having studied at the seminary of Quebec, he left for the North-West in 1783, and remained there till he died, in 1844, at *Sault Ste Marie*, at the age of eighty four. Schoolcraft took French lessons from him at the Sault.

(2) The packs were very seldom over eighty to ninety pounds in weight: those of one hundred and twenty pounds were very few throughout the North-West.

Mr. Perreault had left his canoe at the first rapids, and made canoes of wicker work, covered with moose deer skins, to descend the river in the spring, the water being then high enough to "leap the rapids" (as it is called), (1) with safety.

He told me that, some days before I saw him, the weather was extremely calm and sultry, and that he, as well as the Indians who descended with him, had heard repeated reports of a heavy canon in the direction of the Porcupine Mountain, though distant fifteen leagues; that his canoes shortly after trembled in the water, as if moved by some impulse from beneath. It must have been an earthquake. The account of the noise from the mountain has been since corroborated to me by the Indians in its neighbourhood, who said that they can remember several instances of it in the course of their lives.

The mountains from the Natonagan make a bend to the south until they approach the Porcupine, the direction of which is south-west, presenting its side to the lake. There are three or four considerable rivers between the Natonagan and the Black River.

The Porcupine Mountain and lake, or *Kakewishing.*

The Porcupine or *Kakewishing* Mountain is upwards of three leagues in length and much higher than any other on the south shore; on its summit there is a small round lake which has no outlet, and the water of which is remarkably black. Surrounded by steep perpendicular rocks, it is perfectly inaccessible, and inhabited by a Spirit to whom the Indians pay great respect......

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Off the western end of the mountains there lies a long and high rock which breaks off the sea, and gives a safe landing to canoes, on a little gravelly beach opposite.................................

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(1) *Sauter les rapides.*



There is but one river, and that a very small one, from the Black to the Montreal rivers. This last takes its rise from the *Wapwagannis* or *Flambeau Lake*, about eighty leagues to the south-west ; it is one continual rapid from within ten leagues of its source, and at a few hundred yards from its entrance, it has a fall of fifteen to twenty feet (1) ; the entrance of the river is masked by two high clay banks. *Lac au Flambeau.*

The land tends to the north-west and is for three leagues a stiff clay, rent into deep gullies at short distances. It then gradually declines into a sandy beach for three leagues further, until you arrive at the *Mouskisipi*, or Bad River, so called from its broad and shallow stream, which it is almost impossible to ascend, even in an Indian canoe.

This river takes its rise in the Ottawa Lake, abont one hundred and twenty-five leagues to the westward. The lake has its waters divided very partially, as the chief part takes a southerly course and falls into the Mississipi, and is called Ottawa River. The *Flambeau* Lake has its waters divided also, the greater part taking a south-easterly direction to the Mississipi, and is called Ouisconsin or Medecine River (2).

From the Bad River, the coast runs north, four leagues, to *Chagowiminan* or *La Pointe.* It is all the way a fine strand, behind which are sand hills covered with bent and sand cherry shrubs, and behind the hills, a shallow bay which is a branch from the Bay St Charles. At *La Pointe*, you are nearly opposite the *Anse* or Keeywaynan, the distance I would conjecture to be twenty leagues in a straight line.

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(1) For a description of the country and route, see : F. V. Malhiot's journal. 1st series.

(2) The outlet of the waters of *Lac au Flambeau* is by the *Flambeau* and *Sauteux* rivers, the Wisconsin taking its rise in several small lakes near *Lac du désert,* to the north-west of *Lac au Flambeau.*

The Bay St Charles runs south-west from *La Pointe* and is four leagues in depth and more than a league broad at the entrance. Opposite *La Pointe*, to the north-east, is the island of Montreal, one of the largest of those called Twelve Apostles. On the main land, the Indians had once a village amounting to two hundred huts, but since the traders have multiplied they no longer assemble at *Netoungan*, or the Sand Beach, but remain in small bands near their hunting grounds.

The Twelve Apostles Islands.

When you double the point of Netoungan, the coast tends nearly west, and is composed of high rocky points of basalt with some freestone ; there is one place in particular which is an humble resemblance of the Portals, but not near so high ; it is about a league from *La Pointe*, and is a projection from the highest mountain from Porcupine Bay to *Fond-du-Lac*, a distance of more than forty-five leagues. From the summit of the mountain, you can count twenty-six islands extending to the north and north-east, islands which have never been visited by the boldest Indians, and have a chance of never being better known, as they lie out of the way of the North-West Company's vessels.

Of the islands opposite *La Pointe*, ten or twelve have been visited by the Indians, some of which have a rich soil covered with maple and beech, with deep water and fine trout fishing. The trout in this part of the lake are equal in size and richness to those of Mackinac ; I myself saw one taken off the north-east end of Montreal Island which weighed fifty-two pounds...........

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The Metal River.

There are several rivers between *La Pointe* and *Fond-du Lac* ; the distance is allowed to be thirty leagues, and the breadth of the bay, from a rocky point within a league of Netoungan to the *Roche debout*, or the upright rock, which is a lofty mountain right opposite, cannot be less than twenty leagues.

The Metal River is within ten leagues of Fond-du-Lac, and so called from the fact that the old chief of *La Pointe*, while descending the river, found a large piece of silver ore.

The Burnt River is three leagues to the westward of Metal River ; it issues from one of the lakes of the Little Wild Oats country about thirty leagues to the south-ward, and is only navigable for small canoes..

About sixteen years ago, W*abogich*, or the White-Fisher, the chief of *La Pointe*, made his sugar on the skirts of a high mountain, four days march from the entrance of the river to the south-west. His eldest daughter, then a girl of fourteen (1) with a cousin of her's who was two or three years older, rambling one day up the eastern side of the mountain, came to a perpendicular cliff which exactly fronted the rising sun. Near the base of the cliff they found a piece of yellow metal, as they called it, about eighteen inches long, a foot broad, four inches thick and perfectly smooth. It was so heavy that they could raise it only with great difficulty. After examining it for some time, it occurred to the eldest girl that it belonged to the *Gitchi Manitou*, the Great Spirit, upon which they abandoned the place with precipitation. *Wabogish*, the Indian chief.

As the Chipeways are not idolators, it occurs to me that some of the southern tribes must have emigrated thus far to the north, and that the piece, either of copper or gold, is part of an altar dedicated to the sun. If my conjecture is right, the slab is more probably gold, as the Mexicans have more of that metal than they have of copper.

I have often regretted the premature death of the chief the same autumn that he told me the story, as he had promised to

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(1) The little girl of fourteen was exceedingly handsome ; she soon after became Mr. Johnston's wife.

go and bring it to me if he recovered, and circumstances since have precluded my making an attempt to procure it.

The river of Fond-du-Lac is deep, wide and serpentine, but is navigable only for four or five leagues from its entrance. The portages are many and difficult until you arrive at the Sand Lake, where the tribe of the Chippeways, called " Pillagers", reside. The furs of this country are the best assorted of any of this continent, and the quantity would much increase were it possible to repress the mutual incursions of the Sioux and Chippeways who carry on perpetual war. The tract of country lying between the two nations for near one hundred and fifty leagues in length and from thirty to fourty in breadth, is now visited by stealth, and if peaceably hunted would be more productive than the richest mine of Peru (1).

From *Fond-du-Lac* to *Grand Portage*, the distance is about sixty leagues ; the mountains are high, one of them near the *Portage* is called " The Thunder, " and is the Tenerif of Lake Superior.

(1) This " account " of Lake Superior, though written in 1809, must evidently refer to the condition of the country, west of Lake Superior, several years before it was written.

Mr. David Thompson, the astronomer of the North-West Company, who explored most of this Country in 1798, found the North-West Company in full possession of the trade of that region, with regular posts established at *Pembina, Lac la Tortue, Lac des Sables*,—Sandy Lake,—and elsewhere.

Mr. George Henry Monk, a clerk of the North-West Company, in his " account of the country from Lake Superior to the Head of the Mississipi, " in 1807, says that at their fort, on the south shore of St Louis River, and three miles from Fond-du-Lac, the Company kept two horses, a cow, a bull and a few pigs, and that, with the manure of these, they managed to cultivate a garden of three acres of " pure sand. " which produced over two hundred bushels of potatoes.

At Leech Lake, in the center of this territory, the North-West Company's fort, which had been established several years before, had, he says, a garden which produced one thousand bushels of potatoes, thirty bushels of oats, cabbages, carrots, beets, beans, turnips, pumpkins and Indian corn. The Company had also introduced horses in this quarter, " even cats and hens. "

On the north side of Upper Red Lake, two freemen cultivated small plots of land and more were talking of doing the same. The Sioux had then, practically, been driven out of the country.

Fond-du-Lac was the limit of my voyage on Lake Superior; I was there only for a few days in the autumn of 1792, so that many things worth remarking have escaped my notice............

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The east, north and north-west coasts of Lake Huron consist of basalt and course granite. The Bay of *Machedash* is its extremity to the eastward. There is a small river which takes its rise in Lake Simcoe and falls into the bay, but it is not navigable all its length on account of a fall. However, I am told the portage is only three leagues, and could easily be made a waggon road for small craft, and communicates with the settlements to the westward of York, from which it is only fifteen leagues distant. Matchedash Bay.

The soil in the neighbourhood of York is said to be rich, and the farmers could raise a vast quantity of provisions, were they encouraged by having a sure market for them. This could easily be accomplished by opening a communication with the Bay of Machedash, from whence to the Island of St. Joseph the distance is only ninety leagues.

From the bay, a chain of islands extends to the north-west, of which St Joseph is the last; these render the navigation perfectly safe, as you may either keep outside of them or between them and the shore, with safe anchorage everywhere. By this channel, provisions may be brought to St Joseph, St Mary and Michilimackinac in half the time and for half the expense they are procured from Sandwich, Detroit, &c., and the returns from the above places would arrive much sooner and safer at Montreal.

The soil about Machedash is very fine, and there is some trade with the Indians in the neighbourhood; others from a greater distance would soon be induced to visit the post when once established, nor have I a doubt on my mind but that it would

soon become the most thriving place in Upper Canada, and the center of provisions and transport trade for the fur countries.

St Joseph Island and Fort.

The greater number of the islands in the extensive chain I have just mentioned are excellent land, and St Joseph, which is one of the largest, is three fourths covered with beech, oak and maple, and capable of every degree of cultivation suited to the climate.

Fort St. Joseph.

The fort is erected on a small peninsula to the south west which resembles a bowl turned down, and is joined to the island by a low marshy neck, which is, however, the only spot capable of cultivation near the fort; the hills being a mere heap of rocks of a curious sort of granite, intermixed with stones of different colours, which appear inlaid in them, and of round whinstone, the whole mass is held together by a cold stiff clay.

The marshy neck is now drained and laid out in fields and gardens, which from the unremitting attention of Major Campbell and Captain Trew, of the 41st, are become highly productive, and add much to the health and confort of the garrison, and relieve the eye from the barren ruggedness of the hill, which is certainly one of the bleakest spots in His Majesty's dominions, though at present the seat of justice, honour, politeness and of the most liberal hospitality.

Although the position of St. Joseph is far from being the most judicious that might have been chosen for a permanent post, yet, as a great deal of money has been already laid out upon it, all that is now left to the wisdom of government is to improve to the best advantage what can no longer be conveniently changed.

If I might be permitted to give an opinion, where so many of superior knowledge and of more extensive views might be consulted, I should think that the first step to be taken would be to have the island surveyed and laid out into one hundred and

two hundred acres lots, with encouragement to the settlers, proportioned to the trouble and expense of coming such a distance, which might be much alleviated by the King's vessel, which often comes to the fort, not half loaded.

A road should be opened the length of the island, which would terminate at the north-east channel, and which would enable the garrison to obstruct the invasion of St. Mary's from that quarter. A second should be cut nearly across its south-western extremity, so as to fall upon the entrance of the ship channel, where it is a little more than a gun shot over, which would correct in some degree the blunder of having placed the fort where it cannot check the progress of either vessels or *bateaux*.

Industrious persons would soon find their interest in locating themselves there, as they would find a constant market for every thing they could raise, either at the fort or from the North-West Company, and, in return, would add to the strength and respectability of the post, and enable it to become, what no doubt Government intended it should be, an asylum in case of rupture with America or commotion among the Indian tribes.

Of ores and minerals in this country there is little to be said as no serious researches have yet been made for them. Fossils are also rare ; the petrifications at Garden River and the petrified head of a man found at St. Joseph are the only specimens I have seen. This last was almost perfect ; the eyes, ears, part of the nose and mouth were quite discernable, and the interior of the mouth and cavity of the skull seemed a perfect crystal ; the last could easily be distinguished through the sockets of the eyes..

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Petrifications.

The climate.

Before I conclude this rude and hasty sketch, I must remark that the climate of St Mary's is extremely variable; in summer, the transitions from heat to cold are frequent and sudden, these transitions are equally great in winter, but not so much felt, as the pores are closer and the system better braced. In winter, I have known the mercury to fall from 40 to below 0 in a few hours, and in summer I have seen it above 90°, and below 45° before the sun went down. Yet it is allowed to be a very healthy place, where nothing shortens live but intemperance.

I now willingly lay down my pen and concude a work which, I fear, will not draw much credit on me, but as I write neither for fame nor profit, if any of my friends find an hour's amusement in it, I have my reward.

SAMUEL H. WILCOCKE

DEATH OF

Mr. BENJAMIN FROBISHER

1819

12

NARRATIVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

ATTENDING THE DEATH

OF THE LATE

BENJAMIN FROBISHER, Esq.

A PARTNER OF THE

NORTH-WEST COMPANY (1)

To elucidate the causes which led to the melancholy fate of Mr. Benjamin Frobisher, it is necessary to allude to some of the circumstances attending the disputes that have for several years existed between the Hudson's Bay Company, with the late

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(1) A reference to the 1st Vol. of " The Scribbler ", a periodical edited in Montreal, 1822—1826, will show Mr. Samuel Hull Wilcocke to have been a most prolific and rather able writer, a contributor to several periodicals and the author of several books and essays on a variety of subjects, from a dictionary of the Dutch and English languages, to a History of Buenos Ayres and "Considerations to the Commissioners at Ghent, " &c.

During the quarrels of the North-West Company with Lord Selkirk and the Hudson Bay Company, he placed his ever ready pen at the disposal of the former, and contributed largely to the preparation of the numerous pamphlets published by them at that time, among which " Narrative of circumstances, &c. " " Reports on the North-West trials at Quebec and at York," &c. " Report of Proceedings, Quebec ", and also of their voluminous correspondence with their opponents and with the Imperial Government.

His " Narrative of the circumstances attending the death of the late Benjamin Frobisher, Esq.," of which this is the draft, found among Mr. Roderick McKenzie's papers, was written in 1820, and is probably his last effort in their favor ; its tone clearly indicates that he was at that time a strong partisan of the Canadian traders,

Earl of Selkirk at their head, and the North-West Company of Montreal, of which latter association Mr. Frobisher was partner.

These disputes have in various shapes been laid before the public, and have also been brought before the Imperial Parliament. Without entering, therefore, into the merits or demerits of either party, or the legality or illegality of their respective claims and actions, of which the Public and Parliament will be the judges, it is nevertheless desirable to state a few prominent instances of violent conduct to which one party had recourse in order to destroy the trade, and crush the prosperity of the other.

The first blow aimed at the North-West Company was the seizure of their Depot of provisions in the Red River country, in 1814. To this succeeded the destruction of their forts or posts of Gilbraltar and Pembina; then came Lord Selkirk's seizure

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and a most violent opponent of their rivals in trade. But the best of friends will sometimes fall out, and the year 1821 found Mr. Wilcocke in bitter opposition to his old friends, who had brought very serious accusations against him before the courts of the country, while he, on the other hand, claimed that he had not been sufficiently paid for his services.

Mr. Wilcocke lingered several months in prison, but was released at the request of the American Government, and he removed to the United States, where he began, under the assumed name of "Lewis Luke Macculloh," the publication of "The Scribbler", which, though edited in Montreal, was printed by himself, first at Burlington, afterwards at Rouse's Point and then at Plattsburg. The first volume—the only one printed in Montreal,—is prefaced by a most violent attack against his former employers, whom he treats still worse than he did Lord Selkirk and his friends.

The language of the "Narrative" is exceedingly violent and would throw doubt on the veracity of the facts mentioned, were they not, in the main points, amply corroborated by more impartial testimony.

Mr. Benjamin Frobisher—most probably a son of Mr. Joseph Frobisher,—entered the service of the North-West Company about 1798. He was an able, upright and honorable man, but imperative and violent in temper. Coltman, in his report on the North-West troubles, says, that he was a party to an armed demonstration against the Hudson Bay Company's fort, at Ile à la Crosse, in 1817, and that he challenged his rivals to sally and "fight it out", which challenge was very properly declined by the latter. This might in some degree have explained, but certainly not excused the harsh and cowardly treatment to which he was subjected, and which caused his death.

See : *Esquisse Historique*, pages 143-148.—Gunn, "History of Manitoba."—Wentzel's Letters.

and occupation of their Head Quarters, Fort William, and ultimately the interruption of their northern trade by the outrages committed at the Grand Rapid in June, 1819, which led to Mr. Frobisher's death.

It had long been a favorite object with the Hudson's Bay Company to obtain a footing in Athabasca, and to engross the profitable trade which the North-West Company carried on in that remote and extensive region. They had made several abortive attempts, but all their expeditions had resulted in distress, starvation and death to those engaged in them, in disappointment and loss to their employers.

The success of the North-West Company and the want of it by their rivals may be ascribed to the different organisation of the two companies: to the experience and providence of the one, and to the inexperience and improvidence of the other.

The only practicable route to and from Athabasca and the northern departments of the fur trade,—at least the only route that can with any degree of convenience be pursued,—is through the north-western outlet of Lake Winipeg, leading through Cedar or Bourbon Lake, to the River Saskatchewan. Between that lake and Lake Winipeg is the Grand Rapid, as it is called, consisting of two ledges of rock, the passage of which for the distance of four or five miles, is extremely difficult, and, for rather more than a mile, is wholly impracticable for loaded canoes. There is therefore a portage for that distance across which all goods have to be carried, and it is also customary for all passengers who may be on board the canoes coming down, to land at the top, and proceed along the path to the bottom of the rapid, there again to re-embark and launch into lake Winipeg.

The foot of this important pass affords an excellent military position for a blockading party, and is so situated that a handful

of men, well posted, could prevent the passage of any number of boats.

Frequently, on former occasions, the chiefs of the Hudson's Bay Company have been heard to declare that they would take possession of the Grand Rapid, fortify the pass and intercept all the North-West Company's people, canoes and goods coming from or going to Athabasca and the other northern departments. These threats, though at first they created some alarm from their repetition without any serious attempt to put them to execution, came to be disregarded, and the North-West company's partners and servants continued to pass and repass through this high road, as it may be called, with little apprehension of and precautions against attack, particularly after the proclamation of the Prince Regent, which was issued at Quebec on the 3rd of May, 1817, and had been circulated in the Indian Territories (1).

But in June, 1819, they were, to their cost, undeceived. Mr. William Williams, who had succeeded M. Semple in the service of the Hudson's Bay company under the denomination of "Governor in Chief," determined to display his energy by resorting to this long contemplated measure.

In order to strike this blow with security, a number of the discharged soldiers of the De Meuron regiment, who, in defiance of that proclamation, still retained their engagements with Lord

(1) The proclamation here alluded to enjoins to all persons in the Indian Territories to desist from any hostile aggression and attack whatsoever; requires all officers and soldiers formerly in His Majesty's service to leave the service of the Hudson's Bay company and North-West company within 24 hours after their knowledge of the proclamation, and, amongst other things, likewise specially directs that no blockade or impediment shall be made, by which any party may attempt to prevent or interrupt the free passage of traders or others with their merchandise, furs, provisions and effects throughout the lakes, rivers, roads and other usual route or communication used for the purpose of the fur trade in the interior of North America, with full and free permission for all persons to pursue their usual and accustomed trade without hindrance or molestation.

Selkirk and the Hudson's Bay company, and who were chiefly at Red River, were engaged for this especial purpose, being promised, besides plenty liquor, tobacco and provisions, pay at the rate of a dollar a day per man whilst they continued on this particular service. They were all armed and equipped and were, the majority of them, in their uniforms and regimental caps.

Williams had two small pieces of small cannon, four pounders, with some swivels which were brought from Hudson's Bay, and, accompanied by his military banditti and a number of the Hudson's Bay Company's clerks and servants, all armed, he arrived about the 16th or 17th of June, 1810, at the Grand Rapid, where they met Mr. John Clarke (1) with two canoes of the Hudson's Bay Company, coming from Athabasca.

Charles Racette, an old Canadian hunter who had passed upwards of thirty years in the interior, and who, intending to come down to Canada, had a temporary lodge or hut at the foot of the Grand Rapid, describes their arrival as being with "Une " grande barge chargée de canons, de fusils avec des bayonnettes, " des lances avec des manches de bois de cinq à six pieds de " longueur et d'autres armes " ; adding, " Que, voyant ces atti- " rails militaires, il soupçonnait qu'ils venaient là pour quelque " chose d'extraordinaire. Que M. Williams et M. Clarke ont " entré dans sa loge et lui ont dit que ni lui ni ses garçons " seraient permis de sortir ; qu'il les en défendait au nom du " Roi, et que si aucun d'eux sortait, il serait pris tout comme les " gens du Nord-Ouest ; disant de plus qu'ils étaient venus là " pour prendre les gens du Nord-Ouest. "

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(1) See : " *Esquisse Historique* ", page 130. Mr. Clarke was native of Montreal. He became Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Pelly. On his withdrawal from the service, he returned to Montreal, and lived in the residence called " Beaver Lodge ", which had been occupied before him by his father, Mr. Simon Clarke.— Rev. Mr. Campbell, " History of St Gabriel Church. "

For the more effectual fulfilment of this purpose, they landed one of the pieces of canon and two swivels, placed this artillery loaded on a point of land where it commanded the foot of the rapid, and made an abattis in front. The other piece of artillery remained in the barge, which was moved in the stream as a gunboat, so as to command the navigation.

These were their military preparation, and they soon had an opportunity of putting their threats into execution.

The manœuvres of Lord Selkirk had succeeded in obtaining bills of endictment to be found in Canada against an host of partners, clerks and servants of the North-West Company, for alleged crimes, the falsity of which accusations will be best evinced by reference to such trials as have taken place and the recorded verdicts of acquittal which have been given. Yet, bench warrants had been issued at Montreal, at the sollicitation of his Lordship, against all whose names were found in those indictments and, being the most useful persons in the establishment of the North-West Company, whose removal from the interior and protracted prosecution would be a severe blow, and would produce an almost entire destruction of their trade.

These warrants, (or copies of them,) the legality of which is utterly denied, had been sent up the preceeding year, and they furnished a convenient and opportune pretext to give some shadow of legal proceedings to the outrages which followed.

On the 18th of June, Mr. John Duncan Campbell and Mr. Benjamin Frobisher, partners of the North-West Company, with two clerks, arrived in a couple of light canoes at the Grand Rapid on their way from English River to Fort William. Mr. Campbell was one whose name was included in the fabricated charges preferred in the courts of Canada by the Earl of Selkirk, and was actually on his way to present himself before the courts that were to sit during the following October, for the

very purpose of taking cognisance of offences alleged to have been committed in the Indian Territories.

Against Mr. Frobisher not a shadow of accusation had been preferred, nor was there the remotest defensible pretext for arresting him. There were two men, Louis Majeau and Pierre Boucher, *engagés* or *voyageurs* in the service of the Company, who were in the same predicament with Mr. Campbell.

On arriving at the head of the rapid, as is customary, the gentlemen landed to walk across the portage, and the canoes ran down. As soon as the canoes came within reach of Williams and his party, the two above mentioned men, Majeau and Boucher, were taken prisoners and confined in Racette's lodge under charge of two sentinels, whilst an armed party were posted to meet the gentlemen who were coming along the portage path through the woods.

Mr. Campbell's narrative of his own seizure is in the following words :

" Being ahead of the other gentlemen and nearly at the " foot of the rapid, I observed a man spring up on one side of " the road, but thinking he was some Canadian hunter, I paid " little attention to him, when, to my great surprise, he sprang " towards me and aimed a blow at my head with the butt end " of his firelock, which I fortunately avoided by jumping on " one side. I asked the fellow what his intentions were and " whether he intended to murder me. He replied : " coquin, " 'vaurien, taisez-vous, vous êtes mon prisonnier ; allez, marchez " 'devant moi et le gouverneur Williams aura soin de toi." Before " I could say another word, I found myself surrounded by fif- " teen or twenty men De Meurons, armed with muskets, fixed " bayonets, pistols, swords, &c., whooping, hollowing like so " many demons."

Mr. Frobisher with Messrs Connolly and Macdonald, the two clerks, soon came up and were immediately surrounded and

taken prisoners. Mr. Frobisher was a man of high spirit, but of gentlemanly manners, mild and unassuming upon all occasions when the amiable qualities of social life have the means of unfolding themselves, firm in his conduct and duty when firmness was required, and spurning the idea of submitting to any species of insult, unmerited indignity, or unwarrantable oppression. Of stature rather above the common size, well built and athletic, his strength was great and his constitution unimpaired.

With the feeling natural to a man of this description, he endeavoured to resist this illegal attempt to secure his person, and demanded to know the intentions of his assailants Guns were presented at him ; he knocked the muzzles up with his arm, but was soon overpowered, rudely bid to hold his tongue, and was pushed forward at the point of the bayonet.

They were then conducted to the foot of the rapid, where they were all put into the tent or lodge of Racette, in which the two men, Majeau and Boucher, were confined. The two clerks were however liberated, when Mr. Frobisher whom they had detained, as they said, because he had attempted to defend himself, finding that there neither was nor could be any legal ground to apprehend him, attempted to follow them to the canoes, but was knocked back with the butt ends of the muskets of the soldiery. Now a scene of brutal ill-treatment took place, the consequences of which upon that gentleman's frame were such as, if not entirely, yet in a great measure, to lead to his untimely and miserable death.

It is best detailed in the unembellished words of the deposition of Charles Racette (1) :

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(1) See *Esquisse Historique*, p. 148.

Since the publication of the first series of these documents, &c, diligent but vain researches have been made at the Court House in Quebec to find the evidence taken before the magistrates in this case, which was brought up there before the criminal

" Le deposant était alors dans sa loge ; a vu M. Fro-
" bisher, qui paraissait bien indigné d'avoir été fait pri-
" sonnier, aller à la porte de la loge pour parler aux
" Meurons qui la gardaient ; qu'ayant dit quelques mots en
" anglais que le déposant n'entendait pas, un des Meurons a
" donné un coup de pied fort à M. Frobisher, qui l'a fait tomber
" dans la loge ; que s'étant relevé, le même homme, qui était
" entouré de ses camarades armés, lui a porté un coup de poing
" fort par lequel il a été encore une fois renversé ; que s'étant
" de nouveau relevé et voulant toujours s'adresser aux Meurons,
" M. Frobisher, après avoir été menacé d'un coup de la crosse
" d'un fusil, a reçu un coup sur la tête de côté avec le canon d'un
" gros fusil de soldat qui l'a terrassé à l'instant, et qu'il tomba
" si raide que le déposant le crut mort.

" Que toutes ces violences arrivèrent sous les yeux des dits
" M. Clarke et M. Williams et de l'officier, sergent et caporal des
" Meurons, qui ne faisaient aucune chose pour y prévenir ; et
" que M. Frobisher n'a pas levé la main, ni fait aucun geste
" menaçant, ni était aucunement armé pendant ce fracas, et
" qu'il paraissait parler poliment quand il s'adressait aux Meu-
" rons. "

From the effects of this fatal blow, Mr. Frobisher never recovered as will be seen in the sequel.

The testimony here given of an impartial, uninterested eye witness displays the brutal ferocity which accompanied these outrages, which were perpetrated in contempt of all law and of all superior authority.

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court, on the 29th of October, 1819. It has also been impossible to trace the case itself any further than that a true bill was found on that day against Messrs Williams and John Clarke. On account of some objections, the case could not be proceeded with during the term, and it does not appear to have been called up again.

It is quite probable that the coalition which intervened soon after between the contesting parties put an end to the proceedings.

When Mr. Campbell asked to see the warrant upon which he was stated to be apprehended, Mr. Williams told him, in so many words, that legal proceedings were all damned nonsense in the North-West, and that having now the advantage, he would take good care to keep it, and would follow up the blow he had struck.

Mr. Campbell and Mr. Frobisher were then conveyed in a canoe to a small island in the middle of the stream, about a quarter of a mile from the shore, where, with the two men before mentioned, they were placed under strict confinement in a tent guarded by de Meuron soldiers, and out of which they were not allowed to stir, though the heat was intense and the mosquitoes very numerous, the underwood being remarkably thick on the island.

In the mutilated fragments of Mr. Frobisher's journal (kept in pencil all along, for he was not allowed pen and ink,) which were found with his corpse, he thus describes the first part of his treatment.

" June 19.—We were crossed over to an island in the middle " of the stream, with two of our men. Here we were not suf- " fered to stir out of the tent, or even to satisfy the private calls " of nature without being threatened to be beaten down with a " musket, and a man.................................. with a loaded one " attending us ; all of this by the orders of a man who titles " himself " Governor Williams ". Our food, rotten pemican.

" The cause of treating me thus is merely because I attempted " to resist when those ruffians took me, and told them, man to " man, I did not fear them.

Racette, the Canadian, with his wife and two sons and an Indian family that were there, were also ordered over to the island, and their tents and canoes forcibly taken away from them, most likely to prevent any intelligence reaching the other

parties of North-West canoes which were expected, and thus prevent Williams from following up his blow.

He did follow it up as far as in his power lay. On the 20th of June, the brigade of the loaded canoes of the North-West Company from English River reached the Grand Rapid, at the head of which they were waylaid, and the guide who had them in charge, Joseph Paul, with his son Pierre Paul were taken prisoners out of them. These mens' names were likewise included in the charges before alluded to, and they were then on their route to Canada, to present themselves for trial.

The valuable property which was on board those canoes was doubtless a great temptation for Williams and his armed banditti, but this would have been so glaring a highway robbery, that even their voracious rapacity shrunk from the commission of it. True, however, to their principle of doing all the mischief in their power, they would not allow Paul to guide the canoes down the first dangerous rapid—there are two, almost immediatly succeeding one another.— though he represented that he was the only man capable of it, in the hopes, no doubt, that some disaster might ensue.

The canoes, however, excepting Paul's, which was left behind, fortunately got down without any accident; seeing that they would not permit him to guide his own canoe down, he told Amable Turcotte and Joseph Lepine, two of the men he considered most capable, to go up and bring down his canoe. They did the work safely, and having thus shewn themselves the next best guides in the brigade, they were immediately taken prisoners, without the slightest alleged pretence or accusation.

At the second rapid, Williams asked Paul whom he would nominate to guide the canoes, upon which the latter replied that he would nominate none, as, if he did, they too would be taken prisoners.

The brigade, however, which consisted of seven canoes, met with no serious accident, although in great confusion from the want of guides and steersmen, they, with much difficulty, loss of time and danger, prosecuted their voyage to destination.

Mr. Frobisher and Mr. Campbell, with the men then taken, were sent off early in the morning of the 22nd of June in separate canoes for Jack River, whence their further adventures will be hereafter detailed, when the next exploit of Williams and his gang has been recounted.

In the course of the following day, 23rd of June, two other light canoes belonging to the North-West Company reached the pass that had been thus blockaded. In these were : Mr. Angus Shaw, Mr. John George MacTavish and Mr. William McIntosh, partners of that company. As usual, in order to lighten the canoes, Messieurs Shaw and MacTavish, with their servants and six of the canoe men, landed at the head of the rapid to walk down the portage, whilst Mr. MacIntosh, being in a bad state of health and unable to endure the fatigue of walking, remained in his canoe to shoot the rapid.

When this party came to the foot of the rapid, and were descried by the sentinel, an alarm was given, and they were surrounded by the armed soldiers, and Mr. MacTavish was told he was a prisoner, but neither at that, nor at any other time, did Williams, or any other person under his command, produce any authority or warrant, or assign any lawful cause or even pretext for arresting him.

Mr. MacTavish was separated from Mr. Shaw and put under a guard of four men armed with muskets. Upon Mr. Shaw remonstrating with Mr. Williams against this illegal stoppage of the King's highway, and the scandalous defiance it evinced of the proclamation issued by the Prince Regent, he replied in

great rage: "I do not care a curse for the Prince Regent's "proclamation; Lord Bathurst and Sir John Sherbrooke by "whom it was framed are d...... rascals. I act upon the charter "of the Hudson's Bay Company, and as a governor and magis-"trate in these territories, I have sufficient authority and will "do as I think proper."

Williams and his associates likewise uttered a torrent of abuse against the judges and courts of justice in Canada—though they have pretended to act upon warrants granted by the Chief Justice of Montreal. The whole party abused Mr. Shaw in the grossest manner, several threatened his life, and one soldier clubbed his rifle to strike him, but an old Frenchman stepped in and pushed him away. Another cocked and levelled his gun at Mr. Shaw's breast, but was prevented firing by one of his comrades, a Swiss, who pushed it aside.

During the altercation, the canoes came in sight, having run down the rapids, and Williams immediately ordered Mr. MacIntosh to be seized and dragged on shore, which was accordingly done in a violent and brutal manner, he being seized by the neck and hauled through the water to land, and on his expostulating, one of the Meuron soldiers struck him a heavy blow with the butt end of his musket.

An Iroquois Indian, named Ogoniarto, who was an expert steersman, was likewise dragged ashore and made a prisoner of. Neither for the arrest of this man, nor against Mr. MacIntosh could they allege the slightest pretence, nor did they ever, but Mr. MacIntosh had rendered himself obnoxious to their party by succesfully resisting an attempt made the year before by John Clarke, who was one of the present gang, to take forcible possession of Fort Vermilion, the principal North-West establishment on Peace River, on which occasion, although Clarke had actually entered the fort with a number of armed men, MacIntosh, though at first surprised and taken, got loose and, at

the head of no more than four Canadians, succeeded in driving out the assailants.

Mr. Shaw upon witnessing this shameful treatment again remonstrated with Williams on the cruelty of such conduct towards one wholly defenseless and in his power, but the only answer he could obtain was a repetition of invective and menace.

Upon his again warning Williams of his presumption in thus acting in direct violation of the Prince Regent's proclamation commanding all Her Majesty's subjects to keep the peace and, on no account and under no pretence of supposed rights, to blockade or interrupt the communication by which the fur trade was carried on, the "Governor" spoke with the utmost contempt of the proclamation and of those by whom it was framed saying :

" As for Lord Bathurst, (d...... him,) he is bribed by the " Norh-West gold ; and Sir John Sherbrooke, the judges, juries " and crown officers of Canada are a set of d...... rascals, and " for our part, we shall act independantly of the rascally govern- " ment of Canada. Lord Bathurst will be turned out of office " by Lord Selkirk as soon as he gets to England, which is doubt- " less the case ere this, and I shall make use of the colonists " and every other means in my power to drive out of the coun- " try every d...... North-Wester it contains, or perish in the " attempt. " It was not once, but frequently that such language was used, displaying the insolence of an upstart, the ignorance of a vulgar hireling and the ferocity of a lawless plunderer.

The trunks of the North-West gentlemen were then overhauled, pillaged of sundry articles, and all papers, private and public, taken out. The trunk containing the books, accounts, inventories, letters and other papers relating to the Athabasca department were a particularly welcome prize. The seals of

a great many private letters were broken and the contents perused, and Williams selected and kept all the books, inventories, letters, &c. which he thought of importance, either for rivaling the North-West Company's trade, or for pursuing the system of malicious persecution that had been for so long a time in activity against their proprietors and servants.

To see one's private papers rifled ; to behold the concerns of one's trade examined into and ransacked with avidity, cannot be done without exciting resentment and provoking remarks, but upon Williams observing at the time that, by seizing the persons of the North-West Partners, and taking possession of their papers and property, he would strike them such a blow as they would not soon recover from, and put a speedy conclusion to their contest with the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr. Shaw could not but conclude that when Williams talked of seizing the property of the North-West Company, he must mean the valuable returns in furs from Athabasca and Lesser Slave Lake, which, by the inspection of the papers before him, he knew were on the way, and must necessarily pass the Grand Rapid

He concluded, therefore, it would be best to give up useless altercation and remonstrance, and, in hope of escaping from the band of desperadoes, and to be able to prevent the consummation of their designs by giving timely intelligence of them, he made an attempt to proceed to his canoe to embark when he was stopped, and again put in fear of his life.

His remonstrances were now repeated, and he added that, had he been aware of the intention with which the embuscade had been placed, he would have, with a force of 250 men at least, prepared to compel them to respect the persons and property of his partners and himself.

An exclamation then arose of, " he threatens us ! ", and Williams immediately ordered John Clarke and one Brown to take him into custody, which they did, each of them giving him a blow at the same time, whilst neither, then nor at any other time, was any warrant produced, nor any authority, cause or pretext assigned for such arrest.

But it is tiresome and sickening to dwell upon these repeated instances of lawless tyranny and brutal violence ; the offended laws of the country will one day visit the perpetrators, and inflict *legal* punishment, however inadequate it may be to the enormity of the offence and the disastrous and fatal consequences which ensued.

The three gentlemen, with the Iroquois Ogoniarto and Edward Cain, Mr. McTavish's servant, who had also been arrested without any alleged pretext whatsoever, were, in the same manner as their predecessors, confined in the island at the foot of the rapid with a guard placed over them, who had orders to shoot any one who should show a disposition to escape.

Here they were confined for eight days. On an occasion, while conversing with their guard, upon having been assured that it was the intention of Williams that if the canoes of the North-West Company had attempted to pass, they would have been fired upon, as there were canons pointed and loaded ready to sink any canoe which might attempt it, Mr. McTavish asked one of the men who appeared to be possessed of more feeling than his companions, whether it was really their intention to shed blood if the canoes had attempted to pass, on which he answered : " Those men "—the de Meuron's soldiers from Red River,—" will do whatever they are ordered, and I am certain " if there was a scuffle and we had the victory, few would live " to accuse us of killing their companions.

Racette, the Canadian before mentioned, was all this while also confined to the island. His opinion of this *soldatesque* was not the most favorable. He states that " Il a dû ainsi laisser à " l'abandon tous ses biens et vivres, qui furent en grande partie " gaspillés par ces gens qu'il ne pouvait considérer que comme " une bande de voleurs et d'assassins, et qui se vantaient tou- " jours de leurs exploits quand ils étaient au service de Bona- " parte. "

On the 30th of June, an alarm was given in William's camp upon two canoes being descried coming down the rapid. The men turned out under arms, but it was found that these canoes belonged to the Hudson's Bay Company, and had on board Colin Robertson and another clerk of that company.

To account for the appearance of Colin Robertson at this time and place, it is necessary to state that having been detained at Fort Chipewyan during the winter, where he was treated and attended to in the same manner as the North-West partners, he was, in May, brought out along with the gentlemen intending to proceed to Montreal in order there to answer for his conduct. On the way, he was allowed on his parole of honour to visit the Hudson's Bay Company's post and people at *Ile à la Crosse*, whence he returned and proceeded on with the North-West people to the next establishment of the Hudson's Bay company, called Cumberland House. He was here again permitted to visit the fort and people there upon his parole of honour, but broke his parole and did not return in custody.

These canoes, it appears, brought a rumour that a number of Halfbreeds and Indians were mustering to remove the blockade and release the prisoners; this struck such a panic into the doughty " Governor " and his party, that on the following day he broke up his camp early in the morning in great hurry and confusion, and proceeded with his flotilla and all his forces,

which now consisted of 120 men, toward the north end of Lake Winipeg, taking with him his prisoners, who were each put in a separate embarkation.

In the night of that day Mr. William MacIntosh contrived to make his escape. His indisposition, which was diarrhea, required his frequent retirement, and gave him the opportunity, while they were encamped on a peninsula in the lake to construct, at various short intervals in the wood close to the encampment, a sort of rough raft with branches of trees. Having prepared the frail embarkation, he boldly entrusted himself on it at night to cross the water, with a branch for a paddle ; he succeeded in gaining the opposite shore unperceived, and got along the coast of the lake on foot, suffering much hardship from the want of provisions, from fatigue and illness, until he fortunately hailed a canoe which was passing, and was conveyed to *Bas de la Rivière.*

On his being missed in the morning, a hue and cry was raised, and Williams remained six hours searching for him in the woods. Not having, however, any idea that he could have the means of crossing the water, they only searched on their own side, by which their object was frustrated. Nor were the party left behind to continue search more successful.

The escape of Mr. MacIntosh was a grievous vexation to his enemies, and John Clarke, who was at the head of the searching party, and who entertained a peculiar and personal rancour against him, declared that if he found him he would shoot him. Nay, so much were they annoyed at this circumstance that when Clarke returned at Norway House,—an establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company, at the north end of Lake Winipeg—without Mr. MacIntosh, Williams sent out a band of Indians in further pursuit, promissing them a reward for bringing him in " dead or alive."

It is now time to return to Mr. Frobisher and Mr. Campbell whom we left embarking for Jack River, on the 22 of June. Mr. Frobisher's mutilated journal continues as follows :

" June 23rd.—Marched the whole day and did not encamp " until dark "—" To march " is the Canadian term for travelling, and is as frequently, if not oftener, applied to express the progress of a canoe or boat as of a pedestrian.—" I was guarded " in the canoe by one Miles, with loaded pistols ; 24 hours with- " out eating. The brigade consisted of seven canoes, each of us " in a separate canoe, say five men and Paul, the guide.

" June 24th.—We arrived at their fort, Pike River—Jack River " —early in the morning, when, after remaining some time on " the beach, we were shut up with our men in a small room, " say, eight of us. We embarked after a few hours detention " and were ordered to proceed to...... Fort...... there......we.....

A chasm is here supplied from Mr. Campbell's narrative, who says :

" We were here told that Williams had sent orders to the " person in charge to have us sent down to York Factory. This " we protested against, and demanded to be sent by way of Fort " William, that being the shortest route ; but they would not, or, " as they said, could not act contrary to the orders of Williams ; " that it would make no material difference, as we should not " be detained any time at York Factory, there being always a " schooner in readiness which constantly runs between that " place and Moose Factory, in St James' Bay, from which place " we should have an easy communication by way of Michipi- " coton or Temiscaming. However indignant we might feel at " the duplicity of these people, we were obliged to submit, and " accordingly took our departure.

Mr. Frobisher's journal resumed :

" June, 25th.—We marched hard all day ; passed some very " shallow rivers and lakes.

" June, 26th.—Embarked early ; passed four portages, our " course, due north. This road is extremely bad for loaded " canoes ; guarded by Miles with loaded pistols.

" June, 27th,—Arrived early at an establishment under Link- " later, on the......of a large lake ; "—Oxford House, on the bank of *Lac du milieu* or middle lake,—" remained two hours ; em- " barked, passed several bad rapids and falls ; encamped in a " large lake.

" Monday, June, 28th—We passed one large lake, where they " have an establishment, one Sutherland, master, "—Logan's depot, at swampy lake,— " The declivity from this and before " is extreme, a succession of rapids with four portages............. " ....the current with............

" Tuesday, June, 29th—We arrived at a depot called " The " 'Rock," in charge of one Bunn, a very polite man. The Rock is " a continued rapid ; passed seven rapids. I was guarded so far " with guns and loaded pistols.

" Wednesday, June, 30th.—We were embarked in two light " canoes for York Factory.

" July, 1.—Arrived early in the morning at that fort............. " .... with our men, all together in a " complete hogsty, and forbid to stir out of the fort.

" July, 2nd.—We are allowed nothing but bad water to drink, " and served very scantily in provision.

" July, 23rd.—Our situation is really degrading ! Is it possible " the laws of our country allow this ! we are served with rotten " meat."

Here another chasm is supplied from Mr. Campbell's narrative :

" We were told by Swain (the clerk in charge,) that he had " orders from Williams only to be allowed to walk about in the " inside of the fort, and that if either of us attempted to go

" beyond the limits prescribed, we would be more closely con-
" fined.

" The place which was allotted to us was a very small room
" with four or five cabins or berths for beds, and filled with dirt
" and vermin. The men were confined in the same place.
" Swain announced to us that we would not be allowed any
" liquor, even by paying for it, and that, as to diet, we would
" be served out of the kitchen ; also, that we would not be al-
" lowed pen, ink or paper unless we promised that our writing
" should be inspected by him. On this condition, both Mr.
" Frobisher and myself declined accepting of their " indulgence."

" Iron bars were put into the windows of our quarters.
" Around this house or hut, which was very low, lay heaps of
" filth and dirt, and adjoining the house there was a place in
" which they were in the habit of keeping fresh venison, and as
" it had not been properly cleaned out, swarms of maggots
" issued from it, came through the crevices of our appartment
" and crawled into our beds. We complained of this to Swain,
" but were scarcely listened to, and it was not till after making
" use of hot water and lye for some time that we got rid of
" these unpleasant companions. Our diet was the refuse of
" their kitchen, and even that was not regularly given " ....

Mr. Frobisher's journal resumed :

" July, 8th.—Our treatment is infamous ; we have a large keg
" of salt water to drink, there having been pork in it prior to
" our making use of it. We are all sick with colds and cannot
" obtain the least remedy.

" July, 9th.—Nine boats went off. There seems no hopes of
" our speedy delivery from this.

" July, 10th.—Every man in the fort is forbid speaking to us ;
" were we in the power of the Turk, we would not be worse off.

" July, 11th.—We are anxious for the Governor's arrival.
" This violation of the Prince Regent's proclamation...............

....

On the 12th of July, Messrs. Shaw and McTavish arrived at York Factory. After the escape of Mr. MacIntosh they were conveyed to Norway House, an establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company, situated at the north end of Lake Winipeg, where all the prisoners were confined on a small rocky island in the lake, about a mile from the Fort. Here, Mr. McTavish, having been told that it was intended to send him to the Rock, on the way to York Factory, wrote a letter to Williams reminding him of his promise to send them to Canada. The next morning, Williams came over to the island and told Mr. McTavish that he intended to send him to England, and upon being reproached with the breach of his promise, to send them all to Canada, he carelessly replied: " It may be so, but I changed my mind."

To Mr. Shaw's requisition to be sent to Canada, he said he had neither canoes nor men to spare for his conveyance, that, therefore, he must proceed to the Rock, where he pledged his word—*risum teneatis*—to provide the means to convey him to Canada, admitting at the same time that he had no charge whatever to allege against him. On Mr. Shaw's remonstrating against being thus dragged about as a prisoner without any cause, and in direct violation of his promise, he replied, in a passion: " It " signifies nothing what you say or what you think, you are " now in my power, and I will dispose of you as I think proper." These gentlemen were accordingly conveyed to the Rock, but there too, as was naturally to be expected from such characters, no regard was paid to the pledge given, and they were carried on to York Factory.

During their journey, Edward Cain, Mr. MacTavish's servant and Ogoniarto, the Iroquois steersman, were separated from them

and endeavoured to be decoyed into the Hudson's Bay Company's service. The former pretended to acquiesce, and was after a while sent to one of their posts in the Nepigon country, where, as soon as he found a favorable opportunity, he left them, and found refuge at one of the North-West Company's posts there.

Ogoniarto relates that at a post beyond Jack River—probably the Rock—he was left behind and at liberty ; that both Clarke and Robertson then told him they had no right to keep him prisoner, but that, if he chose, they would engage him in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. He replied that he would not come under any engagement there, but would see what he might do when he got down to Montreal ; that one day Colin Robertson called him into his room and said : *Tiens ! Thomas, je te fais présent de deux cents francs ; voilà un écrit, tu iras au bureau à Montréal et tu les recevras, mais il faut que tu t'engages pour nous à Montréal.*" He was afterwards embarked, in a canoe with Robertson and Clarke, and having met a canoe of winterers who were going down, he was put on board, and came by way of Sault Ste Marie and Upper Canada to Montreal.

To return to the prisoners at York Factory : Mr. Shaw and Mr. MacTavish were assigned appartments within the factory, with permission to walk on the leads or flat roof, but with strict orders not to pass the gate, and they were likewise forbidden from holding any communication with the other gentlemen, their fellow sufferers.

Mr Frobisher's journal resumed :

" July, 13th.—We are deprived of..... intercourse with Messrs.
" Shaw and MacTavish.

" July, 14th.—We applied for medecine, being all sick, but
" were refused...

" July, 16th.—Excessive warm.....prison......Messrs. Shaw and
" MacTavish, a proof they do not intend to send them...........
" .... we can get no meat or water without much
" difficulty, and when we do get it, we are indebted for it to the
" humanity of one Mackenzie.

" July, 17th.—Extreme sultry...

" July............ We find the time tedious..............................
" .... my country will............................ in defiance of all
" law and treated as the vilest of criminals.

....

" July, 23rd.—We are suffocated with heat and stench, our
" small house being full of maggots.

" July, 24th.—Mr. Campbell "—a Hudson's Bay clerk from Athabasca,—" and..................arrived.................. of our desti-
" nation ; God help us under such tyranny. "

....

" July, 28th.—We can get no water to drink : liquors of all
" kinds are forbid.

" 29th.—The Governor arrived ; we are impatient to see
" what...................................after such a long captivity as we
" have endured."

Here the journal becomes perfectly illegible, nor can any thing be made out till the 13th of October, when Mr. Frobisher had effected his escape.

It appears that the hardships he endured and the anxiety of his mind completely undermined his health, and that his intellects were not a little impaired, attributable no doubt greatly to the severe blows on the head which he had received, and from the effects of which he never ceased complaining, being also, in consequence, subject to a giddiness which took him at times, and rendered him incapable of standing.

Mr. Campbell's narrative continues to show in forcible colours the misery of their situation, and the effects produced on their health by their ill-treatment.

" We found ourselves, " he says, " daily more neglected ; " the season was very sultry and the water very bad ; we could " scarcely obtain a sufficiency of this necessary article, bad as it " was, and were therefore obliged to employ the Indians about " the place to bring in some in a clandestine manner, for which " we gave them part of our rations.

" We were all afflicted with severe colds. I applied for mede- " cines and liquor, which I obtained sometime after, apparently " with great reluctance. What I received was a phiol of pep- " permint and a quart of rum, which we got on account of the " North-West Company. Mr. Shaw was at this time very ill " with cold, Mr. MacTavish was also indisposed, and Mr. Fro- " bisher was reduced to a mere skeleton. Our situation was " truly distressing ! I enjoyed better health than the others, " but was far from being well. No one appeared inclined to " give any relief ; pity was totally out of question.

" We requested permission to visit Messrs. Shaw and Mac- " Tavish, and to take the air on the outside of the fort, but were " refused and spurned at. From this dilemma we were in we " received timely assistance from a quarter I least expected.

" There was among the servants in the kitchen a young man " who had served as waiting man to one of the Hudson's Bay " masters, and had wintered at the same place I had. This man " feeling for our miserable situation, one day, when he brought in " some victuals, told me he had three quarts of rum, ten pounds " of loaf sugar and a pound of tea, which he begged me to ac- " cept, and that he would put it through the grating of one of " the back windows at night, adding that whenever he could " find a favorable opportunity he would send to me from the

" kitchen the best victuals he could procure. To this generous " fellow I gave a draft on our house in England for a few pounds, " of which he accepted after much entreaty.

" Williams continued at the depot (the Rock,) until late in the " season, remaining there to arrange all their canoes and men " for the northern departments, and after seeing them all off, he " came down to York Factory. A few days previous to his arrival, " Messrs. Shaw and MacTavish were put in a small building " or hut, back in the yard, the floor of which was over-flowed " whenever it rained. On Williams's arrival, Mr. Frobisher, " myself and the men who were with us were suddenly con- " fined to even more narrow limits and to a space nearly square, " between our building and the range of buildings occupied by " the clerks of the H. B. Co. so that whenever we came out to " take the air we were exposed to the view of every one, and " several times we were ordered to retire before dark and get " to bed and sleep when the weather was almost suffocating."

On Williams's arrival, a fresh endeavour was made and the imprisoned gentlemen again demanded to be sent off to Montreal. On the 3rd of August, Mr. Shaw was admitted to an interview with the governor, who, upon being again upbraided for his breach of promise, replied that he was indifferent what might be thought of his conduct, that as " Governor in Chief " of Rupert's Land, and acting upon the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was authorized to treat all strangers and intruders in their territory as he thought fit. That he would require Mr. Shaw to enter into recognisance to keep the peace, and Mr. MacTavish, with Mr. Shaw as is surety, to enter in a recognisance to appear in a court of justice to answer to some charge which was not specified, and on these conditions he would send those two gentlemen to Moose Factory to be thence conveyed to Canada, but otherwise that they would be detained at York Factory all winter.

A prospect of some alleviation of their sufferings now appeared by the arrival from England, on the 30th August, of the Hudson's Bay Company's ship " Prince of Wales ". On board of the vessel came as passengers ; Lieutenant Franklin of the Royal Navy and three other gentlemen, forming an expedition despatched by Government to pursue discoveries towards the North Pole by Coppermine and MacKenzie's rivers.

This expedition entered into simultaneously with that of Lieut. Parry by sea—the last account from whom left him at the entrance of Sir James Lancaster's sound, in Baffin's Bay—will probably determine the long contested questions of the existence of a North-West Passage, the extent of the continent of America towards the North Pole and the insularity of Greenland. Lt. Franklin reached Fort Chipewyan in days from Hudson's Bay, and wintered there. In the spring of this year he proceeded with guides, hunters, dogs and sledges furnished by the North-West Company, and when last heard of was, at the end of May on the point of starting from the North West Company's fort at Great Slave Lake.

Lieutenant Franklin was the bearer of letters of introduction to several of the North-West partners whom he expected to meet in the interior, and, amongst them, he had letters to Mr. Shaw, Mr. MacTavish and Mr. Campbell.

The visits which the gentlemen of this mission made to the prisoners and the attention they paid them were evidently galling to their gaolers, but from their altered deportment in consequence, Messrs. Shaw and MacTavish were induced to apply for leave to embark for England on board the " Prince of Wales ", to which Williams, after some demur, consented on condition of their entering into such recognisance as he would dictate, to which, as the only means of escaping from their rigourous captivity, they agreed.

Two papers were accordingly executed, of which they could not obtain copies, but which purported to be recognisances: one from Mr. MacTavish, with Mr. Shaw as his surety, to appear in a Court of Justice in England or Canada, under a penalty of three thousand pounds, but not specifying any charge upon which he was to appear, and another from Mr. Shaw, to keep the peace, under the like penalty, and the same day Williams left for the interior.

Mr. Campbell and Mr. Frobisher equally applied to know their fate. The latter received no answer, but the former was apprized, about the 3rd of September, that it was determined he should be embarked with Joseph Paul, Pierre Paul, Louis Mageau and Pierre Boucher on board the brig Weir, Captain Thompson, for Moose Factory, thence to be sent to Canada.

They embarked on the 7th and arrived at Moose on the 26th of September, whence, after a most fatiguing and perilous journey by New-Brunswick (1) and Michipicoton, (which they reached on the 18th of October,) and Sault Ste Marie and Penetanguishine, having passed by way of Holland Landing and York, they got to Montreal on the 30th of November, 1819.

Nothing further is necessary to be stated relating to them than that, having been all of them on their way to Canada to obtain their trials on the charges brought against them, they were, by having been detained so long at the Bay, and carried around so many hundred miles out of their way, precluded from appearing at the court of Oyer and Terminer which had been appointed to meet at Quebec on the 21st of October for the special purpose, and for which they would have been in ample time, had they proceeded by the ordinary route.

Mr. Frobisher now found himself alone with the two Canadians, Turcotte and Lépine, who had been taken out of the En-

(1) New-Brunswick Fort, near the height of land, on the Moose River.

glish River brigade with the Pauls ; his enfeebled body and irritated mind could scarcely support the horror of his situation. As a last effort, and previous to the sailing of the " Prince of Wales " in which he understood his friends Messrs Shaw and MacTavish were to be sent to England, but with whom he was debarred from having an interview, it appears that he addressed a letter to " Governor " Williams, of which the following mutilated copy was found in his pocket book.

" York Factory, sept 16th 1819.

" Seriously reflecting upon the situation in which I shall be " placed by your determination of detaining me here all winter, " in justice to myself, I once more take the liberty of suggesting " to you what ought surely to be regarded as satisfactory. I " will become responsible in any sum you may think proper to " dictate for my appearance in a court of justice, either in En- " gland or in Canada, provided you grant me a passage to " England, and, if necessary, I will join in my recognisance " Messrs Shaw and MacTavish, who, knowing my means, can " have no objection to become my sureties. The critical state of " my health imperiously demand this "..................................

The savages who were his keepers paid no attention to this, and he was doomed to experience the mortifying and miserable prospect of a dreary imprisonment during a long Hudson's Bay winter, when the cold is frequently 60° below the freezing point, and in the hands of a set of merciless enemies.

On the 20th of September, Williams left York Factory for the interior, and on the 25th, the " Prince of Wales " sailed for England with Messrs Shaw and MacTavish, as steerage passengers !

We will follow the fate of those gentlemen no farther than to say that not the slightest attempt has been made, either in Eng-

land or Canada, to fasten upon them any obligation or offence, nor in any way to justify the execrable treatment they met with.

That the real object of the aggressions and outrages that have been detailed was not in any degree to advance the ends of justice, or even to follow up the Earl of Selkirk's malicious prosecutions, but to cripple the means, destroy the energy and finally to expel the traders of the North-West Company from the country, is made evident and is corroborated also by a variety of other circumstances, besides those already mentioned.

Amongst other things, it is testified that John Clarke—one of the foremost and most violent of the party, as well as one of the most unguarded,—declared : " that they arrested the partners of " the North-West Company and their men in order to retard " them, so that the Hudson's Bay people might, the ensuing " season, get to their wintering grounds and trading posts before " those of the North-West company," With regard to Ogoniarto, the steersman :—" that he had no orders to take him, but that he " did so merely to detain and inconvenience the canoes " ;—and speaking of Joseph Paul, who was left pretty much at liberty the whole time :—" that he was treated so because they expect- " ed to gain him over to their side," Mr. Paul's own declaration on this head states :

" Qu'il est convaincu que le but et le motif de leur arrestation " n'était que de faire tort à la société du Nord-Ouest, en la pri- " vant des services de leurs engagés ; qu'il eut occasion en par- " lant avec John Clarke, de lui faire connaître son innocence, " comme son intention et son désir d'aller à Montréal pour se " justifler, Clarke lui dit qu'on connaissait tout cela, mais que " lui, étant un homme très utile à ses bourgeois, ils voulaient " l'avoir à leur service, c'était pourquoi on l'avait fait prison- " nier et non pas pour lui faire de la peine, disant de plus qu'on " avait couru après lui depuis quatre ans.

" Que d'autres fois on lui disait : " donnez-nous seulement " " votre parole que vous monterez pour nous," et voyant qu'il " ne voulait pas quitter le service de la Compagnie du Nord-" Ouest, ils tâchaient de lui persuader qu'ils le gagneraient tôt " ou tard, disant qu'avec de l'argent ils l'auraient tout comme " un autre. Que c'était leur intention de se rendre maître des " meilleurs hommes de la Compagnie du Nord Ouest, ce qui " leur ferait beaucoup de tort, et cela pour se dédommager du " mauvais succès qu'eux—les gens de la Baie d'Hudson,— " avaient eus jusqu'alors dans leur commerce en Athabasca. "

Multiplied instances might be adduced of similar sentiments and conduct, but nothing will be here stated than the additional circumstance that John MacLeod, the person upon whose testimony the charge against Joseph Paul, Pierre Paul and Pierre Boucher was grounded, and who was also one of the party at the Grand Rapid when they were taken, instead of being sent down with them as a witness,—as should have been the case, had there existed any intention of bringing them to trial,—was sent off from the Rock depot to winter at English River, a distance, up the country, of upwards three thousand miles, in a contrary direction.

More stress is here laid on various circumstances that appear foreign to the relation of Mr. Frobisher's individual sufferings and deplorable fate than would be necessary in a mere narrative, but this is done because they all illustrate the malignant spirit that pervaded the perpetrators of the outrage under which that unfortunate gentleman suffered worse than death, death in all its bitterness, death preceeded, as he himself well described it, by " the last stage of wretchedness."

Before commencing the narrative of his ultimate sufferings and calamitous fate, let me recapitulate the names and destinies

of all who were so arbitrarily and shamelessly seized upon at the Grand Rapid. They were :

John Duncan Campbell, Esq., N. W. Company Partner, imprisoned several months at the Bay, brought down to Canada in custody and there set at liberty.

Joseph Paul, Guide, Pierrre Paul, Engagé, Pierre Boucher, " Louis Majeau. "	ditto
Angus Shaw, John George MacTavish.	Partners, imprisonned several months at the Bay, then sent to England, and there set at liberty.

Edward Cain, servant ; made to enter into the Hudson's Bay Company's service, which he left on the first opportunity.

Thomas Ogoniarto, Iroquois steersman, brought out by way of Lake Superior.

William MacIntosh, Partner, escaped at the imminent peril of his life.

Benjamin Frobisher, Esquire, Partner Amable Turcotte, Steersman Joseph Lepine, "	Retained in confinement at York Factory, with what ultimate intention cannot be known.

Although, Mr. Frobisher's constitution was impaired and his intellects affected before the departure of his friends, it appears from the account given by the two Canadians, Turcotte and Lepine, who were left to share his confinement, that both his health and his head became much worse afterwards, and that nothing solaced his mind but the vague hopes of effecting his escape.

Fits of listlessness and sullen indifference would be succeeded by starts of passion and exclamations of despair. He would, night and day, pace his narrow appartment, throwing his arms about, then, clasping his hands, would bewail his hard fate, his deserted and hopeless condition.

His men, with the characteristic gaiety and carelessness of their nation and vocation, would beguile the time with a song, or by persuasion endeavour to dissipate his thoughts, begging him to do as they did, to have patience, and that time would be a cure to all, to which he would reply : *Je le voudrais bien, mes enfants, mais je ne suis pas capable. La tête me tourne, je mourrai ici si je ne m'échappe.* These men emphatically say that, had he passed the winter at the Bay, *il serait devenu tout-à-fait fou.*

Both in his ravings and in his quiet moments, he incessantly applied his hand to the side of his head where the fatal blow had fallen, and complained of that, saying that it would be his death, and he continued to be frequently seized with fits of dizziness from the same cause. Nothing could console or satisfy him but when some means were thought of, or plans devised, for facilitating his escape. To this, the two men were also nothing loth, and dreaded scarcely any thing more than to spend the winter in the dismal confinement in which they found themselves. Both of them were tall and strong beyond the usual standard and size of Canadian Voyageurs, of hardy habits and tried fidelity.

Poor Frobisher had long contemplated the chances of getting away, with their assistance, and exploring his dreary way through the winter wilderness of lakes and rivers, forests and mountains, ice and snow, which separated him from the nearest fort of the North-West Company, from the nearest place where he might expect to meet with friends, assistance and commiseration. This was a distance of nearly one thousand miles !

He calculated too much upon the consciousness of his own former strength of body, hardihood of constitution and innate resources, and allowed not the consideration of his present debilitated, reduced and afflicted state to be weighed into the balance against the dreadful extremities of fatigue and hunger he well knew he must encounter. His whole sollicitude was to extricate himself from the grasp of his oppressors.

The Hudson's Bay chief, Williams, being gone as before said, almost all the men being away to their respective departments, and the Company's schooner having sailed to winter at Churchill, they were much less narrowly watched than before and their sentinels were discontinued. Indeed, the approach of winter, the severity of which in those parts cannot be described to or conceived by the inhabitant of more genial climates, lulled all suspicion of their intention to escape, as every one but those who " groaned under oppressions iron fangs" would have considered such an attempt as one of insanity or desperation ; and in full, it partook of both.

With regard to the preparations they made for the ardous undertaking they had in view, it seems that, in addition to his own observation during his conveyance to York Factory, Mr. Frobisher had procured some written instructions for finding the way with a rough sketch of the country through which he was to pass, and which were found in a torn and imperfect state with his body.

He had his watch, but no compass ; they had, all three, pocket knives and tinder-boxes with flint and steel. He was very bare of clothes and, in this respect, his men were better off than himself ; he had, however, a good three point blanket, and his men had also each one.

For some time back they had, in contemplation of such an expedition, economised as much as possible of the pemican and

meat that was served out to them, and had laid bye all they could from their scanty allowance to form a stock for the journey and which, at the time of their departure, they calculated would be enough to last them all three for about a fortnight.

They had also one whole dressed orignal skin and some pieces to supply them with shoes and mocassins, together with two or three spare pairs of mocassins and leather mittens, which they did not anticipate would become part of their stock of eatables.

They procured an old net, which was carefully secured, being always wrapped round the body of one of them, and which was the greatest treasure, next to a gun, they could possess. A canoe was a *desideratum* they could more easily supply, and had they not succeeded in getting one on the spot, they had found a plan of proceeding as far as Rock House on foot—one hundred and fifty miles—and there, by taking to the woods on the opposite or north bank, to make observations, undiscovered, where and how the canoes lay, and then cross over in the night by swimming and creeping on all fours through the shallow, and so secure a canoe.

A small canoe, however, lay neglected on the beach by the sea side, which they decided to take, and, having got together their few necessaries, their net and their small stock of provisions, they stole out of their place of confinement in the night of the 30th of September.

Mr. Frobisher carried what they had to the river side and the two men silently got the canoe over a neck of land into the river. Committing themselves to the mercy of Providence, assisted by a night tide for about ten miles, they embarked with lighter hearts and more cheerful anticipations of the future than they had for a long time before indulged in.

Though Mr. Frobisher's wasted frame still exhibited the sad effects of his sufferings, no sooner did he find himself liberated

from the hard oppression under which he had groaned, than his spirits and mental energy returned and in a measure supported him for a considerable time, and although he still constantly complained of his head, his healthy appearance had partially returned, and the buoyant state of his mind, from the hopes and expectations of ultimate escape, enabled him to encounter the difficulties that presented themselves, even at the outset of their labours, with comparative and unlooked for vivacity and fortitude

He could soon occasionally join his men in the chorus of some *voyageurs* boat songs, with which they bequiled the tediousness of the voyage and the labours of the paddle.

It was not, however, during the few first days, nor until they were passed Rock House that they durst make any noise. There was not indeed much risk of their meeting with interruption, yet, the meeting with a straggling hunter or a fishing party might have been as fatal to the success of the escape as the rencounter of an entire brigade.

Rock House they passed in the night, silently creeping up the opposite side of the stream, in which they were favoured by the uninterrupted noise of the successive rapids in that part of the *Rivière du Diable*, called " Hill River " by the Hudson Bay people.

Their labour was excessively hard, up the seven or eight strong rapids immediately above the Rock House, at most of which they were obliged to cross the portages with their canoe.

They had understood that the next establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company, which was Logan's, at Swampy Lake, had been abandoned, and they now therefore pursued their way more fearlessly, and generally, when encamped at night, set their nets and caught some fish.

By " encamped " the reader most not understand that they had any tent, or even the advantage of a tarpawling or sail to serve as a substitute, but " encampment " is the *voyageurs* term for their place of nightly rest, whatever their accommodation may be. In the present instance, a small clear place on a rising ground was found, a few branches of trees set up to windward, a fire was lit, their scanty meal taken, and each man layed down wrapped up in his blanket, exposed to whatever weather the night brought. In that latitude and season of the year, (October,) it is boisterous and severe, heavy storms of rain, sleet and hail being followed by intense frosts and frequent snow-storms.

A soldier's camp bed of straw under his sorry canvas tent would have afforded a luxurious shelter in comparison to their hard and unsheltered quarters. They were, however, running from slavery and had, though a distant, yet a cheering prospect of deliverance, motives to endure privations and miseries untold and unknown to all but those who have suffered them.

Looking at the mutilated and half effaced scraps that remain of Mr. Frobisher's pencil journal it becomes partially legible on:

" October, 13th. - Encamped at the entrance of Knee Lake " ; (a lake about sixty miles long and full of islands.) " Set our net ; " took fine fish.

" October, 14th —Degraded (1) at the Old House ; " ("Degraded" is a *voyageurs* term for being prevented from proceeding by the weather ; being weatherbound.) This was an abandoned post of the Hudson's Bay Company on the North-West shore of Knee Lake) " took 6 fish.

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(1) The French Canadians, to this day, make use of the word " *dégradé* " whenever stopped on their journey by unfavorable weather. The word is unknown in that sense in France.

" October, 15th.—Marched all day ; strong head gale ; set our " nets ; took 35 fish.

" Oct. 16th.—We had a fine day. Encamped at the end of " Knee Lake..

" Oct. 17th.—We marched all day...............found............... " the fort this day..................................G...........................

" ....Lake.

" Oct. 18th.—We were obliged to remain all day in our " encampment to pass..................fort...........night. We have " strong assurance that our remaining...........will be successful " and at..................net gives a good deal of fish. Passed the " fort in the night, undiscovered, encamped.........in the lake." The fort they passed here was Oxford house, on the east side of Mid-Lake, so called from being about mid-way between York Factory and Lake Winipic. It is about twelve leagues long, full of islands, and the passage very intricate.

" Oct. 19th.—............until.... ....the risk of the day. We " have not yet lost much.........by missing our road......... took " 7 carp, 3 small pikes.

" Oct. 20th.—We were much at a loss for the road and saw a " small canoe, and when we came alongside, we were surprised " to find it was a half breed in the Hudson's Bay employ. This " will."...

Many lines are here obliterated.

Here it was that the more formidable obstructions in their progress occurred. They were frequently at a loss to find the best or, indeed, the only proper route. In the lower parts of the river and in the lakes, poles, which they call may-poles, were erected on most of the conspicuous points, some on the right and some on the left hand of the direct route, but all right upon the route. When these fail, it is necessary to look out

for portage paths, beaver dams, vestiges of encampment or other signs of canoes having passed, and all these are necessarily made more difficult to discover or trace when the snow falls and covers the ground.

The increasing severity of the weather not only bore hard upon them, scantily as they were provided against it, but the accumulation of the ice in the rivers threatened and soon effected the stoppage of their progress by water..................................

The next legible place in the journal runs thus : " River be-
" fore they were expended : took 18 fish..............................

" Oct. 21th.—We encamped in the......... ....
" .... walking.

" Oct. 23rd.—We had a heavy fall of snow ; took 20 white
" fish, slept on the ice ; attempted to break it, but it's too strong."

After stopping nearly two days, still hoping to get on in their canoe, it being yet an early period for the rivers to be entirely frozen up, they were forced to give up that hope and to prosecute their dreary journey on foot.

Having hitherto taken fish along their route, they had not entirely consumed their pemican, of this they had at this time about two pounds left and about two handfuls of meal.

In addition to his disease and debility, Mr. Frobisher had now got swelled legs. Walking across the numerons portages had been all along a painful exertion to him, and when under the necessity of traversing on foot so many hundred miles as yet remained to pass before he could expect to obtain relief, it is wonderful that he resisted as he did.

In the course of their journey the weather appears to have been peculiarly against them. Before they could expect it, according to the usual course of the season, they were prevented from proceeding by water, by severity of the frost, and in less than a

week after, when the frost would have been most acceptable, the weather broke and the thaws and floods impeded and retarded their progress on foot nearly as much as the ice did when in a canoe.

" Oct. 24th.—Clear weather, very cold, the ice not breakable. " Threw away one canoe, set our net, took two white fish."

Nets are set under the ice by making two holes at a distance from each other equal to the length of the net, and passing it from one to the other by means of poles.

The white fish mentioned in this journal are a species that abounds in most of the lakes and rivers in that country. They are excellent eating and weigh about half a pound each. It is to be observed that though, at the time the fishing of these unfortunate travellers was not scanty, they could not lay up a stock from any surplus they might have as they had neither salt nor any other means of preserving it ; besides, in their emaciated and wasted state, it was next to impossible to carry anything in addition to what they had.

" Oct. 25.—We marched all day, passed many portages in the " woods along the rapids, the river we find long: encamped on " a lake." This was Wepenapec Lake, which is about 18 miles long. " Set our net, took three carps. We found vestiges of " Indians here.

" Oct. 26th. - We followed the Indians' track all day. Passed " Hill Portage and one large lake; encamped on the river.

" Oct. 27th.—We had snow last night; luckily the first pipe " from our encampment."—The Canadian *voyageurs* often designate distances by pipes, that is, the distance intervening before they stop to light a fresh pipe. This is more or less and may be from one to three hours—" we found two Indians ; a large camp " along a rapid. They had abundance of fish. Here I am in " hopes to finding a guide to take me to Pike River.

" Oct. 28th.—We left the Indians, I got a guide to conduct us " to Pike River by a shorter route, but, to our great disappoint- " ment, a large lake we had to pass was open water. This " obliged us to strike off through the woods to the canoe road.

" Oct. 29th.—We fell on the canoe road ; advanced by a small " river in which the current runs to Pike River. Our guide left " us ; gave us a good chart of the road to Lake Winipic, which " we can reach from this in six small days, but we shall lose " time in Pike River."—The Indians draw charts of their routes on pieces of bark or on dressed skins. This Indian chart was not found upon Mr. Frobisher. Small days mean short days journies.—"............as we............ road for the Winipec.

" Oct. 30th.—We marched hard all day, the weather too mild ; " encamped ab...............hand of the last lake.

" Oct. 31st.—We reached Pike River; the thaw so great, we " could not advance.

" Nov. 1st.—We passed the portage, the river being nearly " open, we however got in the canoe road above it. We only " took one pike in our net. Encamped near our last encamp- " ment when we came from Lake Winipic. We set the net.

" Nov. 2nd.—The thaw great; remained, the ice being weak ; " took 16 white fish in our net; mended it and set about drying " fish.

" Nov. 3rd.—We had snow and rain; the river nearly open. " Took 14 white fish. We are obliged to go along the beach, " so that we cannot advance. This thaw retards us much, " which is really vexing, being so near Lake Winnipic.

" Nov. 4th.—We took only eight white fish; set off from our " camp; the wind north and cold ; made a good day ; encamp- " ed near the Old House.

" Nov. 5th.—We passed the Old House ....

" ....within two leagues of Norway
" House.

" Nov. 6th.—................................ attempting...............
" ....the ice not strong enough. Set our net.

" Nov. 7th.—Took twelve white fish ; set off from our encamp-
" ment. Shall be able to cross to the other side of the lake ;
" encamped about.................. the ice will, I hope, be bearable
" to cross to-morrow, when we shall at last reach Lake Wini-
" pic.

After this, they did not take a single fish whilst Mr. Frobisher was in existence. His remaining strength was rapidly going ; his feet, particularly the left, from the European shoes he wore being too tight, became so lacerated and swollen, that it was with difficulty he could walk at all, and the men were often obliged to support him over dangerous places.

Norway House, an establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company already mentioned, at the north of Lake Winipic, was not far distant, and Turcotte and Lepine, seeing the little prospect there was of Mr. Frobisher overcoming the hardships that still remained to be encountered—they had travelled full five hundred miles and had yet about four hundred to go (1)—and surviving these accumulated hardships, proposed to him to repair to that post and give himself up again.

This, however, he determinately refused to do; his horror was so great at the idea of falling again into the remorseless hands of the ruffians by whom he had been so grossly ill treated, that he preferred braving death in its most appalling shape, a death of starvation, cold and fatigue. " *Non, mes enfants*," said

(1) The distance from York Factory to Cumberland House is much shorter, but it was probably much lengthened by the sinuosities of the route they had to follow on the canoe road.

he, "*je mourrai plutôt en chemin que de me rendre de nouveau à* "*ces bourreaux.*"

They, therefore, encouraged each other to persevere, and though they were speedily reduced to have recourse to what articles of leather they had to supply the cravings of hunger, they floundered on as well as they were able.

The last entries in Mr. Frobisher's journal are thus :

" Nov. 8th.—We at last crossed........................

" Nov. 9th.—Made a good day on the lake.

" Nov. 10th.—Encamped at the Portage.

" Nov. 12th.—Encamped.

Here all his forces seem to have been exhausted, and though for eight days longer he kept journeying on through the woods, morasses and desolate places of the wilderness, he was scarcely conscious of his own existence. His left foot became worse, the flesh was entirely torn off and the bones and sinews were exposed to view.

Every night, he lay down with a strong fever upon him and appeared not only exhausted, but besides himself, constantly too, did he complain of his head and of the fatal blow he had received, and to which he, throughout, attributed his inability to contend with the hardships and miseries which he otherwise thought himself able to overcome. His men have nevertheless expressed their astonishment at the extraordinary vigour with which he, by starts, exerted himself.

Frequently having to wade through water, ice, mire and snow up to their middles, Mr. Frobisher would sometimes lead the way when they themselves hesitated and shrunk from the exertions.

Their only food was at length their dressed orignal skin, which they cut and broiled at night, with the addition, some-

times but very seldom, of some *tripe de roche*, the Iceland moss of the druggist, which they gathered from the rocks.

One day, they found hanging on the branch of a tree, and left there by some Indians—as is often done for signals to their friends or for other purposes—a strip of undressed buffaloe skin, between two and three feet long and two inches wide. This was a great treat, being far better and more digestible than the dressed leather they had lately lived on. They broiled part of it the same night and Mr. Frobisher partook of it with comparatively much relish.

On the 19th of November, when they had reached the border of Bourbon Lake, or Cedar Lake, although within two days march of Moose Lake Fort, the North-West Company's establishment to which they had directed their weary steps, Mr. Frobisher sunk entirely under the wretchedness of his fate.

No longer able to walk, he had for some distance been carried by his men on their shoulders. But human nature could no longer endure this. Enfeebled themselves to excess, it would have been certain destruction to all, either to attempt to carry him further, or to remain there without food or assistance and with not the slightest chance of procuring them.

During the greatest part of this day, Mr. Frobisher lay in a state of seeming insensibility and stupefaction. The men remained with him, still hoping he would recover. Towards evening he suddenly rose up, and regaining his scattered senses, considered what was best to be done.

They lay that night on a rocky piece of ground, clear from snow, and after holding a consultation, it was agreed that the two men would leave Mr. Frobisher there, make the best of their way to Moose Lake and send people to his relief. This plan was executed next morning.

They left him under the shelter of a screen of pine branches, wrapped up in a blanket, with a good fire near him, abundance of fire wood collected within his reach and water in a hollow part of the rock. What was left of the dried skin—a piece about twelve inches in length—they broiled for him on the coals before they went.

In their relation of these affecting incidents, when asked whether that was the only article of food left with Mr. Frobisher, they answered : No, that they also left him a pair of leather mittens and his own European leather shoes, and that all the means of subsistance they took for themselves were a pair of leather mocassins each !

....

....

When the men left him, he gave them a note in pencil directed to the acting person at Moose Lake for the North-West Company in these words :

" L'Epine and Turcotte will inform you the deplorable state
" they leave me here in Rabbit Point, at *Lac Bourbon*. Should
" my men arrive safe, for God's sake lose not a moment to send
" men, dogs and provisions before me to relieve me from the
" last stages of wretchedness.

BENJ. FROBISHER.

Nov. 20th.

He told them to be of good cheer and make haste, and then bidding them farewell, turned round in his blanket as if to take repose.

The winter road through the woods from Rabbit Point to Moose Lake, had the men been acquainted with it, would have brought them to the post in two days, but they did not know it, and were afraid of running the risk of losing themselves.

With the summer road they were acquainted and that, therefore, they followed.

Their exhaustion was so great from want of nourishment and fatigue that it was only on the 24th they got to Moose Lake. They eat their mocassins on the road and had once got three small fish, about six inches long, in Lake Bourbon, and this was all the food they had for four days. Their famished and utterly wretched appearance told too well what they had suffered.

They were, of course, unable to return with the men whom Mr. Nelson, the gentleman who was in charge of the post for the North-West Company, sent out, without delay, to relieve Mr. Frobisher.

The spot was, however, easily found, and on the 27th of November the dead body of Mr. Frobisher was discovered in the same place where he had been left by Turcotte and Lépine. It appeared that he had consumed the piece of skin and had likewise eaten the heel of one of his shoes.

His body was found lying across the place where the fire had been, and the lower parts from the hips to the midlegs was burnt and partially consumed. His left hand grasped a stick with which it appeared as if he had been stirring the fire, or raking it nearer to warm himself. It is probable that in doing so, and in leaning over for that purpose, he had been attacked by the same giddiness and dizziness which had before affected his head, and had fallen in the fire.

The season did not permit of his interment; all was frozen stiff and hard, and neither could a grave be dug nor the body straightened. His obsequies were therefore left to be performed in the spring.

Early in the next season,—this year 1820,—when the North-West canoes came out, Turcotte and Lépine, the survivors, were

with them. The whole brigade repaired to the spot, found the corpse in the same position, and making as good a coffin as the circumstances would permit, interred the remains of Mr. Frobisher in a grave dug on the spot where he came to his untimely and wretched end.

Thus perished miserably a gentleman who was highly esteemed by all who knew him, an excellent master, beloved and respected by his friends and servants, and a most useful member of the society of which he was a partner.

Mr. Frobisher was a native of York in England and was in his year.

The following letter which passed between Mr. Connelly— the gentleman who was, on behalf of the N. W. Co, at the head of the Department in which the catastrophe occurred—and Mr. Williams will close this narrative. They are both dated " Cumberland House, " which arises from the fact that both the N. W. Co and the H. B. Co. have establishments close to each other, and to which the same name was given. (1)

....

Cumberland House, Dec. 24th.

Sir

I presume that you are acquainted with Mr. Frobisher's departure from York Fort. The sequel of his undertaking I think fit to relate to you, that you may not be misrepresented and that you may prepare a defence of the proceedings which will now become a matter of interest, not only to his connexions, but to the people of Great Britain.

Copy of part only of one of these letters has been found in a revised copy of this " Narrative."

He was left in Cedar Lake by his companions to procure assistance for him. He was unable to proceed any further through sickness—the consequeuce of severe blows he received on the 18th of June last,—and extreme fatigue. Immediately, a conveyance for his transportation to Moose Lake was sent, but what remained of this unfortunate gentleman was found miserably burnt near the fire which had been made for him. He was probably suffocated from his inability to move, or perhaps driven to this deed by the extremity of hunger. It is a man beloved by those who knew him, of family and of fortune, who has perished in this shocking manner.

Your conscience, no doubt, acquits you of being the instrumental cause of so horrible a misfortune, but, Sir, I would rather be where Mr. Frobisher is than be Governor Williams !

It is in vain to urge that Mr. Frobisher brought that disaster upon himself by leaving York Factory; he could not have escaped from York Factory if you had not detained him there, with what justice we have yet to learn. But I consign this question...... ....

Mr. DUNCAN CAMERON

THE

NIPIGON COUNTRY

1804.

WITH EXTRACTS FROM HIS JOURNAL.



Mr. DUNCAN CAMERON.

Mr. Duncan Cameron was the son of a United Empire Loyalist who had emigrated from Scotland and settled at Schenectady on the Mohawk. At the declaration of Independence, Mr. Cameron, unwilling to renounce his allegiance to the British Crown, left for Canada with all his family, and after six weeks of fatigues and sufferings,—" sufferings, hardships, exposures and privations more severe than anything narrated of the Pelgrim and Puritan Fathers of New-England in their voyages from England to Massachusetts Bay." (1)—he succeeded in reaching his new home, on the Canadian shores of the St-Lawrence.

The North-West fur trade was at that time about being revived. The story of the immense success obtained by the Henrys, the Currys, the Frobishers, the Ponds had given a strange impulse to the trade, and all minds were fast being turned towards the North-West. Young Cameron, believing, like most young men of his

(1) Ryerson, "The Loyalists of America and their times. Vol. II, p. 189. 189-207.

age, nationality and circumstances, that his chances of acquiring an easy and rapid fortune lay there, sought for an engagement under an able and experienced trader, whom he found in a Mr. Shaw who had for many years traded in the Nipigon, and the father of Mr. Angus Shaw, several times mentioned in these documents.

In 1786, Mr. Duncan Cameron entered the North-West Company as a clerk, and was, soon afterwards, placed at the head of the Company's affairs in the Nipigon district, one of their most extensive departments, one very difficult of access and where a keen opposition had to be met, not only from the Hudson Bay Company, but also from the many independent traders who still held their own around the shores of Lake Superior.

His administration of that district nevertheless proved a success, but the labours, the hardships and fatigues he had to undergo at times, considerably impaired his health. Had it not been for his desire to maintain the ground he had gained after several years of hard work, it is not probable that he would have undertaken the trading expedition, the journal of which is now given.

The following extract from a letter he addressed from Kaministiquia to Mr. Alexander Fraser on the 7th of August, 1803, is interesting as it shows to what measure of self sacrifice the Old North Westers were ready to submit when the interests of the Company required it.

"I was very ill a part of the winter, owing, I suppose, to the great hardships I had to endure last fall, going in by the extraordinary bad weather I met with, and being badly man'd; but I recovered, as you see, and arrived here the 9th July,—by the way of the Nipigon, —with tolerable returns and at that time in good health, which did not last long for, I can assure you it is with great difficulty I can hold my pen, but I must tell you that the X. Y. sends in to the Nipigon this year, therefore, should I leave my bones there, I shall go to winter.

"I am obliged to take the old road again, as I find that my absence in the fall causes some disquiet to the Indians, who think that if I leave them they will soon be abandoned altogether, therefore I intend to convince them to the contrary,—besides it makes very little odds in the road, for I had about 200 leagues to go beyond River *au Tremble*, and fifty-three portages...... "

Mr. Cameron was not only an intelligent, hardy energetic and enterprising trader, but also a kind hearted and noble minded man. He stood high in the estimation of his co-partners, and when the complicated state of the affairs at Red River, in 1814, made it necessary for the North-West Company to choose a person to watch the proceedings of the Hudson Bay Company and Lord Selkirk, and resist their encroachments, he was selected by the Agents of the Company for this most difficult and ungrateful task.

This choice was, however, an unfortunate one for the peace of the country and more so even for Mr Cameron himself, who, with all the sterling qualities he possessed, lacked, nevertheless, that spirit of forbearance and self-control so essential in the trying circumstances in which he was placed, and in dealing with such determined and reckless opponents as those he had to contend against.

No man was more cordially hated by the officials of the Hudson Bay Company than Mr. Cameron, and no man detested them and Lord Selkirk more than he did. The consequences of this mutual dislike and of the overbearing dispositions of the contending parties are well known. They gradually led to violence, illegal arrests, confiscations, robbery, and culminated in the total destruction of Fort Gibraltar, the Head quarters of the North-West Company, at the Forks of the Red River, and in the tragedy of the 19th of June, 1816, by which Governor Semple lost his life, Fort Douglas was destroyed, and Lord Selkirk's new colony once more dispersed.

Mr. Cameron's arrest at Fort Gibraltar,—where he and his clerks where taken by surprise,—the cowardly treatment to which he was personally subjected, his illegal detention for more than a year at York Factory, his forced voyage to England, are only episodes in the long series of crimes and odious abuses of the authority of law which were committed by both parties during the reckless contest in which the two rival com-

panies were engaged. For this high handed arrest and illegal detention, he obtained damages to the amount of three thousand pounds.

Mr. Cameron remained but a short time in England, where he was immediately set at liberty, without even being brought to trial, and on his return to Canada, he retired from the North-West Company and settled at Williamstown, in the County of Glengarry, where he lived a quiet life in the genial company of several other old North-Westers who had made Glengarry their home. He represented that county in the House of Assembly of Upper Canada from 1820 to 1824.

One of Mr. Cameron's sons, Sir Roderick Cameron, is now living in New-York, and is engaged in the Australian trade.

THE NIPIGON COUNTRY

I

Extent and nature of the country.—The climate.—Quadrupeds and birds.—How the country was peopled.—History of the fur trade.—Competition in trade with the Hudson Bay Company.

II

Population; *totems* or tribes.—Family ties and relationship. —The Natives; their qualities and failings.—Singular cases of cannibalism.—Marriages.—The feast of "Naming the Child."—Their ideas of rank and politeness.—Indian life.—Habitations. —Women's strength and labours.—Indian sagacity.

III

Religion: future life.—Manhood fastings.—Conjurors.—The "Medecine Bag" and "Medecine Piece."—Credulity of women. —Care of the sick.—*Jongleurs.*—Early marriages.

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Muddy lakes.—Discouragement of the men.—Conjurors.—Lac la Savanne.—Difficult navigation.—Osnaburgh Fort; cordial reception by Mr. Goodwin, Factor of the H. B. Co.—Love of liquor.—The haughty chief.—Trading chiefs.—Trading enterviews and conferences.—Indian and *Voyageur* pride.— The Natives.—Mr. Cameron leaves for the interior.—Difficult voyage and poor prospects.—He establishes a Fort.—The liquor trade.—Ruinous competition; its effect on the Natives.—Decline of the trade.—The Premium system. — Fear of starvation. — A fall fishery.

A

SKETCH

OF THE

CUSTOMS, MANNERS, WAY OF LIVING

OF THE NATIVES IN THE

BARREN COUNTRY ABOUT NIPIGON

I

Extent and nature of the Country.—The climate.—Quadrupeds and birds.—How the country was peopled.—History of the fur trade.—Competition with the Hudson Bay Company.

The Nipigon department takes its name from the lake called by the Indians *Aminipigon*, which the French, for brevity sake called *Nipigon*, and lies between the 49th and 57th degrees north latitude, and is bounded: on the south, by Lake Superior, on the south-west and west, by the north-west road from Lake Superior to the lower end of Lake Ouinipique; on the north-west and north, by Hayes river and part of Hudson Bay; and on the north-east, by Hudson Bay. Its greatest length from

Pierre Rouge, at the entrance of Nipigon River; to the Lake of the Islands, on the Hayes river, is about three hundred and fifty leagues and its greatest breadth, from Trout Lake to Eagle Lake, is about one hundred and eighty leagues, but in most parts not over eighty leagues.

The two thirds at least of this country are nothing but rivers and lakes, some fifty leagues long; properly speaking, the whole country is nothing but water and islands; I have never travelled as yet above three leagues by land without finding either a river or a lake on my way.

The winters are very long and severe; some years it may be reckoned winter from the 15th of October to the latter end of May. In the year 1797, we were obliged to make use of our snow shoes till the 29th of May and the ice only disappeared on the 24th of June, but that was the latest spring we had since I came into the country. Every season here has its inconveniences; in winter we are tormented with the cold, and in summer much more so with the mosquitoes, sand flies, etc

Trees. See: Peter Grant, "The *Sauteux* Indians." (1)

Fishes. " " " " " "

Animals. Dogs are the only domestic animals they have in this part of the country; they are very useful to them for hunting and some times even for food. The wild animals are the moose, reindeer, bear, wolf, wolverine, fishers, foxes of different colors, linx or cat, otter, marten, mink, weasel, pole cat, porcupine, rabbit, a sort of badger of the smallest kind, ground squirrel, brown squirrel and flying squirrel, a vast number of mice, on which

(1) In order to avoid repetitions, reference will often be asked, as in this case, to Mr. Peter Grant's Sketch of the *Sauteux* Indians, which is, in some instances, more complete.

the martens mostly subsist. The only amphibious animal in this country is the beaver.

The birds which reside here in the winter are the raven, several kinds of screech owls, whisky jacks, and a few other small birds. The birds of game are the pheasant, two kinds of grey partridges, the white partridge, an excellent and very pretty bird, a few magpies, with pretty feathers and a fine long tail. The first spring bird which makes it appearance here is the gray and white headed eagle; then come the crows, black birds and a variety of wild fowls, such as swans, bustards, geese, cranes, loons, gulls, and a great variety of ducks, &c. which make their appearance here in April; but they are only birds of passage and and do not remain over twenty days on their way to the north side of Hudson's Bay, where they go to hatch and cast their quills and feathers. They begin to make their appearance again about the middle of September, on their way south. Some years there are many pigeons, which are very fat and palatable when they feed on berries, very plentiful here some years, such as: strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, gooseberries, sandberries, cranberries, small cherries and abundance of wild currants of different colours (1). Birds.

This part of the country has been peopled about one hundred and fifty years ago, partly from Lake Superior and partly from Hudson's Bay, as it would evidently appear from the language of the Natives, which is a mixture of the Ojiboiay, or Chippeway (2) as some call it, spoken at Lake Superior and the Cree or Masquigon spoken at Hudson's Bay. Origin of the population.

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(1) For a classification of the quadrupeds, birds, fishes and plants of the North-West, see: Archbishop Taché's "*Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique.*"

(2) *Sauteux.*

16

Every old man with whom I conversed, and from whom I made some enquiry on this subject, told me that his father or grand father was from either of these two places, and that the reason they came so far back could be accounted for in no other way than in the following: Population was then on the increase both in Hudson's Bay and on the shores of Lake Superior, and as Indians, who are obliged to rove from place to place for a good hunting ground, are equally at home in any place where they can find their living, they took to the interior of the country where they found innumerable rivers and lakes, swarming with a vast quantity of fish, beaver and otters. When one place was exhausted, they would retire farther and farther back till these two people, who are undoubtedly of the same origin, as well as all ancient inhabitants of North America, (except the Esquimaux, who by their long beards and filthy ways of living quite differ from all the Indians,) began to meet one another in the interior and to intermarry by which they, at length became one people.

History of the fur trade.

As there were no traders at that time anywhere in the interior, some used to go every spring to Lake Nipigon or *Monontagué*, where the French had trading settlements; others went to Albany, Severn or York Fort, in Hudson's Bay. In the course of time, the population became more numerous and wanted traders to go farther inland. One Monsieur Clause, who was afterwards killed by the Indians at *Fond du Lac*, was the first who passed Lake Nipigon, in the year 1767, and got as far as *Nid du Corbeau*, which was then considered a great distance indeed. He and his men where almost starved to death and reduced to eat several packs of beaver to preserve their lives.

This was a poor encouragement to others; however, some years after, other traders came to *Lac la Savanne*, *Nid de Corbeau* and *Lac du Pichou*, where several men were starved to death at different times. In *Lac la Savanne*, no less than four out of eight

starved in one year. This gave the country such a bad name that men could not be had at any price to bring in goods for half the demand, and what little they did bring was of bad quality and the men themselves neither clever nor energetic and persevering, so that the Indians continued going down to Hudson's Bay, where they received much more attention and got better goods for their furs.

This state of things made the Natives despise the Canada traders, whom they considered as poor, pitiful (1) creatures who could neither supply themselves nor the Indians. They would take their goods on credit, pay what they pleased with the worst of their furs and carry all their fine and prime furs at Hudson's Bay, so that the trade had become a loosing business, although the country was rich, and fortunes might have been made in it.

When I first came as clerk (2) in this country, in 1785, the whole Nipigon only produced 56 packs, although there was then no opposition either from Hudson's Bay or any where else, and although one third of what now forms the Lake Ouinipique Department was then belonging to the Nipigon. The present returns are too well known to require mention. I could easily enlarge upon this subject and refute completely an opinion which formerly existed concerning my own management of that department, but I do not wish to do it, nor to appear in the least an egotist, especially as I believe the public are disabused on that subject, and I am happy to think all prejudice is done away.

The English, seeing the Indians come so far to trade with them while they had traders on their own lands, thought that by

Hudson Bay Co's competition.

(1) Pitiful, *faire pitié*, is synonymous of poor, disappointed, starving. *Tu vas faire pitié* was, with the Indians, a threat of a grievous character.

(2) To Mr. Shaw, at that time an independent trader and the father of Mr Angus Shaw, who became a partner and an Agent of North-West Co.

going into the interior, the Canadian trader would get little or no share of the trade. For this purpose, in the year 1786, they got up as far as Osnaburgh Lake where they built a fort. They had a good run of trade for a couple of years, which encouraged them to penetrate still further until they at last came as far as Red River, but the more they made settlements, the less popular and the less respectable (1) they became with the Indians, who began to pay them frequent empty handed visits, expecting to be treated in the same manner as when they went once a year to Hudson's Bay with canoes loaded with furs. They soon found their mistake, and began to think as little of the English as they did, thirty years ago, of the Canadian traders, so that, at present, one may say that they are looked upon as " slaves " (2) and get but a very indifferent share of the trade, for which they pay very dear, whereas we are getting more and more respectable every year.

No one attempted to go beyond *Nid du Corbeau* and *Lac du Pichou* till the year 1793, when I sent one Mr. Turcot, with three well mounted canoes, to penetrate as far north as he possibly could, but they got no farther than Big Lake (3) and told in the spring that it was both needless and impossible to get any farther. I did not, however, take his word for it, but, in spite of all the orders I gave them, none of them got any farther till I came into this quarter myself, in the year 1796, when the English were again carrying all before them. Since that time I got above one hundred leagues farther than Big Lake and met with the York traders.

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(1) The Indians, much like many modern civilized men, called "respectable," lavish or liberal traders, whom they consequently considered as rich.

(2) *Voyageur* and Indian expression which means: "poor, miserable, without influence."

(3) Probably, Lake Severn.—See the Journal ; 6th of September.

It is true I had to go through small creeks and long portages which were, till then, reckoned impracticable, often at the risk of starving both myself and my men. My namesake, Mr. Dougal Cameron (1), who was always ready to undertake as well as to undergo any hardships for the interest of the concern, made two very narrow escapes, and saw himself reduced to eat the parchment out of his windows; but, thank God! we have all escaped as yet, and have been rewarded by tolerable good returns.

I am, however, sorry to remark that this part of the country is now very much impoverished since; beaver is getting very scarce, but I have nevertheless managed to keep up the average of returns by shifting from place to place every year and increasing the number of posts, which, of course, augmented the expenses and made the trade dearer, but that cannot be helped at present, and we must conform to circumstances and hope to see a reform soon.

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(3) Mr. John Dugald Cameron was, I believe, the brother of the Honorable Duncan Cameron, at one time Provincial Secretary of Upper Canada. He entered the service of the North-West Company about 1790, and passed most of his life in Nipigon district.

In 1843, he was still doing duty under the Hudson's Bay Company, and was then, with Mr. McLoughlin and Mr. Charles McKenzie, the last of the old North-Westers who had seen service with the Honorable Roderic McKenzie.

On his return to Canada in 1844, Mr. Cameron settled at Crafton, near Cobourg, with his Indian wife, to whom he was ever as courteous as if she had been an educated woman. He died at Crafton, leaving a son, Mr. Ronald Cameron, whose daughter was married to a Mr. Clousten, of Winnipeg.

II

Populations : *totems* or tribes.—Family ties and relationship.—The Natives; their qualities and failings.—Singular cases of cannibalism.—Marriages.—The Feast of "Naming the Child."—Their ideas of rank aud politeness.—Indian life.—Habitations. Women's strength and their labours.—Indian sagacity.

Population. The number of souls inhabiting the Nipigon Department does not exceed 820, of which 238 are males from fifteen upwards. These are divided into the following *totems* or tribes from which they take their family names: the Moose, Reindeer, Bear, Pelican, Loon, Kingfisher, Eagle, Sturgeon, Pike, Sucker, Barbue tribes and a few of the Rattlesnake tribe.

Use of *totem* marks. By these *totems* they are enabled to leave letters or marks on their way as they travel, by which any other of their acquaintances who may travel the same way afterwards can immediately tell who they are and which way they went. By these means, when they wish to meet, they are never at a loss to find each other ; the traveller will take a piece of birch rind, and with coal or the point of a knive will design his totem, that of his wife and of any other person in the band, the number of males and females of such totems, designing each according to their importance. The wife never takes the husband's mark, but retains that of her family, and the children of both sexes take the father's mark.

They leave these marks fastened to a pole and pointed in the direction they are going ; if in summer, they will leave a bunch of green leaves, which will, from their withered state, give a pretty good idea of the time they passed. If any of the family



died lately, he is represented without a head, or laying on the side.

They also write songs for one another by designing birds, animals or whatever is the subject of it, and these songs are immediately understood and sung by the people who see them, although they had never heard them sung by any one before.

All those who are of the same mark or *totem* consider themselves as relations, even if they or their forefathers never had any connexion with each other, or had seen one another before. When two strangers meet and find themselves to be of the same mark, they immediately begin to trace their genealogy, at which they even beat my countrymen, the Highlanders, and the one becomes the cousin, the uncle or the grand father of the other, although the grand father may often be the youngest of the two. It is not an uncommon thing to hear an Indian speak of twelve grand fathers and as many grand mothers. **Family ties and relationship.**

The children of two brothers or two sisters always style themselves brothers or sisters, and so will their children and children's down to the last generations ; but the children of a brother and those of a sister do not, and it is lawful for them to marry together, but not for two of the same mark, although perhaps is in no other way connected. They do sometimes marry, but it is against the will of the parents, and they are greatly despised by the others for it. If a quarrel should happen between a *totem* or namesake of theirs and a cousin, nephew or nearest relative of another mark, they will side by their namesake, whom perhaps they never saw before.

....(1) **Their personal appearence.**

They are in general very well featured, especially their women, some of whom would be real beauties if their complexion was

(1) See : Peter Grant, " The *Sauteux* Indians. "

fair, although it is generally more so than those inhabiting warmer climates. They all have excellent teeth and pretty black eyes, which they know very well how to humour in a languishing and engaging manner whenever they wish to please.

Their qualities and failings. They are courageous and possess in the most eminent degree that force of mind and love of independence which are the chief virtues of man in his savage state. They are not so ignorant as some suppose them to be, but are, on the contrary, a very intelligent people, quick of comprehension, sudden in execution, subtle in business, very inventive and industrious, and they are certainly the most patient and persevering people on earth.

With all these good qualities, they have many bad ones which are indeed inseparable from their savage state. When sober, they are of very gentle and amiable disposition towards their friends, but as implacable in their enmity, their revenge being complete only by the entire destruction of those against whom they have a spite. They very seldom take that revenge when sober, as few people disguise their minds with more art than they do, but, when in the least inebriate, all they have in their mind is revealed and the most bloody revenge taken.

Love of Liquor. It is not from absolute sensuality, nor for the sole pleasure of drinking that the flavour of liquor creates such an irresistable craving for more; they merely seek in their orgies a state of oblivion, of stupefaction, and a kind of cessation of existence, which constitutes their greatest enjoyment. I have often seen them, when they could get no more liquor, boil tobacco and drink the juice of it to keep themselves in that state of intoxication.

The crimes, murders and folies they commit when inebriate are entirely attributed to liquor, so that, when mischieviously inclined, they feign to be drunk, expecting that no one will lay

their crimes to their account when in that state. If you find fault with an Indian for any thing he has done when the least in liquor, his answer will invariably be that he remembers nothing about it, but if you promise him any thing, he is sure to remember it, and ask you for it next day.

Indians are by nature very ungrateful; you may render them ever so many services and bestow ever so many favors on them, the last thing they do for you must be paid for. They are the greatest and most shameless beggars on earth; give them ever so much, they will still continue to ask for more until they receive a decided refusal. They are all very deceitful, and many of them great thieves: it is by no principle of honesty that they pay us their credits, but solely on account of the good reception they expect, and from fear of being refused when again in need. Being themselves unacquainted with honor and honesty, they are very distrustful of us, thinking us worse than themselves. Ingratitude, &c.

See : Peter Grant, "The *Sauteux* Indians." **Hospitality.**

There are a great many cannibals among them, but most of them become so by necessity and starvation: fathers have eaten their children, husbands their wives, and wives their husbands when they happened to be the stronger. The weakest is always first sacrificed to this inhuman custom, and the strongest, most treacherous or cruel sometimes survives the last of a whole family. **Singular cases of cannibalism.**

There are a few who are cannibals by inclination and go about by themselves hunting for Indians with as much industry as if they were hunting animals. The track of one of these is sufficient to make twenty families decamp with all the speed in their power. They look upon those who go about in this manner as invulnerable, so that attempting any resistance is useless,

and instead of destroying them whenever, by their number, they have a chance to do so, they make them presents of clothing and provisions, begging of them to spare their lives and allow them and their children to live, at the same time acknowledging their lives to be at his or her mercy, women being also addicted to this horrible manner of living.

A women, some years ago, killed her husband from fear of being herself and children killed and eaten up by him. Her suspicions were aroused by seeing him drink a large quantity of raw blood, quite warm out of the body of an animal which had just been killed and opened. He appeared, as she said, quite wild and distracted in his looks, and she became so much frightened that she immediately split his head in two with an axe, before he had time to become quite invulnerable. She, moreover, said that it was high time to kill him as he often told her he dreamt he would become a " man eater ". Although his body was quite warm when I opened him, his heart was already full of ice within him (?), and she was highly approved for what she did, even by his nearest relatives.

Women-hood.

When a young woman finds herself come to a state of maturity, she retires to conceal herself with as much care as a criminal would take to keep out of the reach of justice, and when her mother, or any other female relatives perceive her absence, she will inform her female neighbours, and all will begin to search for the missing one. They are sometimes three or four days without finding her, all of which she passes in abstinence, and I really believe she would rather die than show herself before being found out. When found, her mother will bring her some water, a small kettle, a birch rind dish and provisions, such as they have at the time. These provisions she must cook herself, and not presume to come into the wigwam, not touch any, thing others are to eat, for fifteen and sometimes twenty

days. Nobody will join her during that time either in eating or drinking, nor even touch the kettle, dish, &c. she uses, as those articles are considered as poisonous to all but to herself! This kettle and dish she afterwards always keeps to herself for cooking and eating whenever her menses return, as they are otherwise unfit for use.

On every return of her illness, she retires from the wigwam, makes a shade for herself and there lives quite secluded for several days, and there is no fear that any of the young men will go near her, although, at either times, they ramble rather freely among the young women when the fires are out and the old people asleep.

The married women, when come to a certain age, have a little more indulgence when in this situation; they may sleep in the wigwam and even pass the whole day in it, but they must go and cook out, and must not dare touch the victuals of their husbands, nor eat, nor drink out of the same vessel.

When a young man wishes to take a wife, he employs his father, or some other near relative, to go and give the young woman's father, or some other near relative, a present of a gun or of any other valuable article he may have, and ask for the young woman. If the demand is agreable, the present is accepted, but if they are sober at the time, the marriage is delayed until the next drunken frolic, when the father or brother of the young woman will take her by the hand and deliver her to the young man, without any further courtship or ceremony, and without even consulting in the least the inclination of the young woman, who perhaps has never spoken to the young man before. **Marriage.**

The husband must then go and live with his father-in-law for a year at least, and give him all he hunts during that time, the father-in-law, however, finds him necessaries and clothing,

and if he is a good hunter, which is the best qualification he can have to ingratiate himself with the old people, he is maintained and treated the best of the whole family ; the old man may then even give him one or two more of his daughters, which is the greatest compliment he can receive. The son-in-law, to show his gratitude, will remain with and maintain the father-in law as long as he lives, while another does the same to his own father if he has been lucky enough to have daughters to give away.

Polygamy ....

Although a plurality of wives is allowed, they seldom take more than four, sometimes all sisters, who live together in great harmony, without the least jealousy towards each other ; the first or favorite wife presides over the others.

If an Indian's wife dies, the father-in-law will immediately replace her with another of his daughters if he has any single ; and when a woman loses her husband, one of his brothers, if he has any, is obliged to take her for wife and bring up his deceased brother's children the same as his own, and the first child he has by her always passes for the deceased husband's, even if it should be born three years after his death.

Feast of naming a child.

There are neither feasts nor wedding when they associate together, but when a child is to be baptized (1) they make a grand feast. The father appoints any one he choses to stand as minister on this occassion. The ceremony is always delayed until a sufficient number of relatives or friends are assembled, the father then presents to the officiating minister a quantity of the choicest provisions the country and season can produce and religiously kept, perhaps several months, for the circumstance.

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(1) The French Canadians make use of the word *baptiser* whenever a name is to be given to anyone or anything; this accounts for the word "baptized" being used here.

These provisions are then immediatly cooked, and the parson sends to invite every one in the place, except children. The invitation is made by presenting you with a quill, without saying a single word, and as Indians are never much encumbered with furniture for the reception of company, every one has to bring his dish or plate with him.

On entering the festive wigwam, you place your dish before you and return the quill to the person who presented it to you, and who immediately takes the dishes and devides the meat, or whatever it may be, according to the instructions of the parson who must eat none of it himself. During the feast, either before of after all the shares are made, the parson makes a long harangue which very few white men can thoroughly understand, however well versed in their ordinary conversation.

When this harangue, delivered with great energy and with all the oratorical power he can muster, is over, you are desired to do charity to the child and eat what is in your dish, because it is not yet able to eat for itself at this feast given in hopes it may live to partake of many feasts in future.

The parson sings and beats his drum during the whole meal, and then taking the child in his arms, he delivers an oration in which he wishes it all manner of happiness in the course of its life, and that it may live to wear gray hair and see its grand children. If the parson is an old man, he wishes the child to look at the sun at least as long as he did, and then sings another song in which he names it. The whole of the feast must be eaten up and sometimes lasts several hours, during which the parson must continually sing and beat the drum.

I was invited to several of their feasts on different occasions, and was invariably obliged to get help to finish my share, which was far above my appetite, especially as those Indians are the

dirtiest cooks and filthiest gluttons on earth. An Indian can eat as much as he pleases.

Other feasts.

They likewise make feasts from which boys, women and children are excluded ; these they call their " Medecine" or conjuring feasts, at which they observe a number of ridiculous ceremonies, such as eating without a knife, striving who can finish his share first, dancing, walking so many times around the fire, retiring one by one in rotation, and several other foolish ceremonies too tedious to insert here. I have also often been invited to those grand feasts, and as it would be exceedingly insulting to refuse such an invitation, I always had to accept, but often thought the politeness bestowed on me amply repaid by the foolish capers I was obliged to cut to perform my share of the ceremony.

Rank and politeness.

See : Peter Grant, " The *Sauteux* Indians. "

Reckoning of time.

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They are very punctual to their rendez-vous, and I have often seen them arrive at the same day at my house, although they had not seen each other after having fixed the rendez-vous, some six months before. When the weather is clear they can tell the time of the night by the stars, and be guided by them better than we can.

Their conferences show them to be men of genius, and they have, in a high degeee, the talent of natural eloquence.

Indian life.

All these Indians lead a wandering life, both winter and summer, and when they have killed or started all the moose and deer in the neighbourhood and dried or eaten up all their meat, they move to some other lake or river and look out for fresh tracks. They are remarkably good at tracking animals in all

seasons, and are seldom mistaken in judging how old the track is.

If they find nothing and can procure nets, they go to some fishing place, but since I have had the management of this department, I have seldom indulged them in that article, except old men and a few who have large families to support, as it only inclines them to indolence (1).

They dry all their meat and, sometimes, their fish, both to preserve it and to make it lighter of transport, as they have a great number of portages to carry across. The man carries his canoe, his gun and his medecine bag, the woman and children must carry all the rest of their lumber, which consists of kettles, axes, bales of dried meat, a drum or two, (which must always follow them, for it would be as difficult for an Indian to do without his drum as it would be to go without a gun,) bags wherein they have their knives, files, the bones and scrapes to dress their skins and leather, powder, shot and ball, tobacco, some cloth, their furs (if not hid somewhere,) and their birch rind covering. Tents.

This covering is carried about with them both winter and summer, and is made of thin bark sewed together with a small root called *wattap*, till they are long enough to cover one side of the lodge or wigwam; consequently, when they arrive at the place where they intend to put up, they have but to cut a number of round poles or perches which they set up at about a foot and a half from each other at the lower end, and join them all at the top ....

....(2)

The men sit flat on the brush with knees drawn up close to their breast, the women, on their knees, with their legs folded in under them in lieu of stool.

(1) Refer to Mr. Cameron's journal.
(2) See Peter Grant, " The *Sauteux* Indians."

When several families intend to inhabit the same wigwam, they make it longer, with a door as above described at each end and two or three fires along the middle. Thirty people will live in one of these without being in the least crowded, whilst ten of us would hardly find room either to sit or lie down. The brush being laid and the poles set up, they put on the birch rind covering to within a foot from the top which always remains uncovered to let the smoke out.

An Indian will pass the coldest night in winter in these lodges without fire and with only an old blanket over him, when we would be freezing with two good blankets, besides our clothes.

Women's strength and labours.

Their women must, even in the severest weather, put up all these lodges and cut all the fire wood, as a man would consider himself degraded by doing that work, even if he had nothing to do all the time, but he will sit quietly smoking his pipe and hurrying them in the work. The man goes off early in the morning with his medecine bag, his gun, powder horn, shot pouch, his axe and ice chisel and leaves the women to fold their covering, pack up and haul along every thing they have. If they have daughters, they give each a load in proportion to their strength, and their youngest children they carry on their backs, tied up standing in a sort of cradle peculiar to the country and well wrapped up in moose or rabbit skins, with a blanket over the whole to screen them from the inclemency of the weather (1).

One would be astonished at the heavy loads these women can haul or carry, even when pregnant, and they will seldom miscarry, although you may see some of them going about blind

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(1) See Peter Grant. " The *Sauteux* Indians, " for the details of construction of these cradles.

drunk, tumbling among stumps and stones a few days previous to their delivery. Divine Providence has bestowed on these women a constitution suitable to the miserable life they lead...

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Immediately on being delivered, the greatest part are as able as ever to go about, even in the coldest and worst days of winter, and attend to her usual occupations. They are all good midwives for all they require, and many of them even lay in without any one to assist them.

The women are considered as mere slaves to their husbands, some of the bolder hussies nevertheless make themselves very independent and " wear the breeches, " when the husband happens to be good natured. The women must dress the leather, make and mend the shoes of the whole family, skin and dress all their furs, mend their clothes, cook, put up and take down the lodge, cut and carry home all the fire wood, kindle the fire every morning, dry the men's shoes and rub them quite soft before they presume to present them to their husbands in the morning. They must set and attend the nets whenever they fish, and generally serve their husbands even if they were doing nothing at the time, and themselves very busy.

The men hunt, build canoes, (which the women sew and pitch,) snowshoe frames ready to net and which the women must finish; they make axehelves, paddles, *traines* for hauling in winter and every other crooked knife work. Still, they undergo as great hardships in winter as the women, for very often one man has to hunt and provide for fourteen or fifteen persons.

When travelling, the women set off on the man's track till they come to the place where he left his medecine bag; they here commence to work, shovel the snow down to the ground, and commence building in the usual manner. The man, who only stopped here to hang his medecine bag, goes off hunting or to work some beaver lodge, and will perhaps not return till late

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at night, sometimes with a beaver or two, or whatever they chance to kill, and very often with nothing at all.

An Indian never loses his way in the woods, and will always find the place where he left his medecine bag, even if he had never been in the country before.

Mode of curing meat.

Whenever they kill a moose or a deer at a distance from the wigwam, they immediately skin and cut it up, lay the hide over the meat, and cover the whole with snow. This work takes them but a very short time, as they are all excellent carvers, and can cut up every joint of the largest animal with the worst knife which comes in their way. Next day, they will move towards the place where the animal lies, and the women, as soon as they have finished building, go for it, separate all the bones from the meat; they hang the latter over the fire to make it lighter for hauling and carrying, and they pound and boil down the bones to make what the white men erroneously call marrowfat.

Indians seldom remain above five days at the same place hunting all they can find in the vicinity, and then move on in search of more game. They are sometimes obliged to move every day and are very often several days without being able to kill any thing but a few rabbits or partridges, which are given to the children, while they go without any thing themselves. They seldom move more than three leagues at a time, on account of the children, who are not able to walk farther ; but those between three and four years old are provided with small snow shoes, with which they come on behind, but must walk that distance.

III

Religion.—Future life. — Manhood fastings. — Conjurors. — The "Medecine Bag" and "Medecine piece"; credulity of women. —Care of the sick.—*Jongleurs.*—Early marriages.

These Indians have no religion, but acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of all things; they neither adore, worship, nor fear him, as they think him to be all goodness, unconcerned about poor mortals and, of course, incapable of doing harm to any one. They suppose that each Element is ruled by particular gods, and to them and to the Evil Spirit they offer all their sacrifices. **Religion.**

They also believe in a future life, and that when their course in this shall be finished they shall join their departed friends in an Elysium, which they suppose to be an extensive plain or meadow in which they will find abundance of every thing they can desire. **Future life.**

They believe that their arms, instruments and utensils of all kinds will be transformed like themselves, and consequently, when an Indian dies, his drum, his pipe and smoking bag, an axe, a knife and a small kettle, some tobacco, his canoe and paddle, if in summer, and his snow-shoes in winter, are all laid in his grave that he may make use of their souls in the other world as he did of their bodies in this. The body of the deceased is painted and dressed in his best apparel, that he may make a decent appearance in entering the region of the dead.

Some years ago there was an Indian dying at my house from stabs he received from another Indian in a drunken frolic. A

gentleman, named Perreault, who was with me at that time, wished to baptize him when he was beyond recovery; he took great pains to explain to the Indian the benefit he would receive thereby, but the Indian very cooly answered that his father, brothers and several near relations were dead and that he would die in the same manner they did, that he might go and join them. When we were burying this same Indian a few days after, his mother addressed him a long speech, when in his grave, desiring him to continue his course straight and not to turn his head to look behind him in order to entice any other of the family to follow him before their time; that he would soon join his father and departed relations, whom he had not seen these many winters; that although he was pitiful for want of a smoking bag and wherewith to make a fire, yet to take courage and make all the haste he could to join his departed relations, and she continued conversing with him in this strain for a long time, as if he was still alive.

Manhood fastings.

When a young man arrives at the age of fourteen or fifteen, he imposes upon himself several days of the severest fasting, without even taking a drop of water till the cravings of hunger and thirst force him to break his fast. During all these fasts, which are several times renewed, he dresses in his best apparel, paints and ornaments his person with all the trinkets he can muster, such as rings, earbobs, earwheels, if he has any, if not, he ornaments his ears with dyed quills, swan's down, or a piece of old kettle, cut and polished, barley-corn or common bead necklaces; leggins or cloth boots and garters embellished with beads or porcupine quills, and moccasins on his feet; a piece of cloth from 9 inches to a foot wide around his middle, a cloth or molton *capot*, Canadian make, a cap or capuchon on his head and a blanket over the whole. This forms the full dress for the

vulgar, a chief's son gets a shirt and a hat from the trader he deals with.

During his abstinence, the young man retires from the wigwam in the evening and sleeps in a lonely place, the most elevated he can find in the neighbourhood, he sometimes erects a high stage or scaffold to sleep on, and whatever he happens to dream of during his abstinence becomes his belief and religion.

When the young man has done dreaming and fasting, he sets to work collecting ingredients for what he calls his Conjuring or Medecine Bag, which consist in different roots, barks, weeds, grasses. dyed quills, swan's down and small bits of wood made into knick-knacks of different shapes, according to what he dreamt. For each of these he composes a song, without which they would have no efficacy as a medecine.

He will then buy other roots or medecines from any other Indian who may have any to dispose of, and tell him that such a root, bark or leaf is good for curing such and such disease or pains, &c., &c., and the other will believe him as firm as we believe the Gospel. These medecines, however, are worthless unless accompanied with the song, which is sung in concert and paid very dear by the credulous Indian. I have often seen Indians make more in a few days out of their medecine bags and songs than they could do by their whole winter's hunt.

The young fellow is now admitted to all their conjuring feasts and ceremonies, and he, by degrees, acquires impudence enough to pretend that he knows more than those who instructed him ; he is now a complete quack and an accomplished conjuror, who, by his knowledge, can cure all imaginable wounds or diseases, and becomes as secret and mysterious in his performances as ever a freemason was with his sublime mysteries.

Some of these conjurors will pretend that they can do super- **Conjurors.**
natural wonders from what they dreamed, such as conjuring

a man to death, making him become blind, preventing him from succeeding in his undertakings, &c., &c., and are even impudent enough to pretend that they can command to the elements. Being once wind bound for several days, an Indian came to me and said that if I gave him as much liquor as would make him drunk, he would soon make the wind cease ! ! !

He who has the most impudence to impose upon the credulity of others, becomes the greatest and most dreaded conjuror among them. It is really unaccountable that, brought up together, and all about as enlightened or ignorant, they should make each other believe such nonsense. This superstitious fear explains why an Indian seldom imputes any unfortunate event to natural causes but invariably believes that another Indian whom he thinks has a spite against him, has been employing his art in conjuring to make him unhappy or unsuccessful ; on the other hand, it makes them cautious in giving offence ; Indians, in fact, seldom quarrel when sober, even if they happen to hate each other.

The Indian who had succeeded in acquiring the highest reputation as a conjuror is consulted like an oracle ; if any children or young people fall dangerously ill, this great personnage is desired to baptize them over again, which explains why Indians always have several names, and let him have ever so many, he is sure to have a nickname besides.

Whenever they intend going out to hunt the moose or the reindeer, they conjure and beat the drum a long time the night before, in hopes of charming any animal they may then find, and whatever good luck they have, is attributed to their drum and Medecine bag.

Credulity of women.

This conjuring or medicine bag is always carried by the men themselves, and the women are as much afraid to touch it as

they would be to touch a venimous snake or toad. These women are very credulous and their husbands make them believe whatever they please and, among other things, that by virtue of this bag they will know whenever their wives prove unfaithful to them or misbehave in anything. The consequence of this is that they are pretty chaste when sober, but when the least in liquor, they indulge themselves in such sport as comes in their way ; when found out, they will say they remember nothing about it, and were senseless at the time, so that it was not they who misbehaved but the liquor. A woman, therefore, is never reckoned a prostitute for what she does when inebriate, provided she was never known to misbehave when sober, in which state she would not favor even her favorite gallant.

Every Indian has what they call his " medecine piece " of all the game he kills, such as the snout of the moose, the tongue and heart of the deer, the paws of the bear, and so on ; this piece is always cooked by itself and no female, young or old, ever dare taste it, if she did, she would either die or turn as black as jet and lose all their nails. They sometimes pay us the great compliment of bringing us such a piece, but they will then inform us of its sacred quality, and tell us not to allow any women to touch it, as they would immediately die. I need not say that I have often seen several women living with the white men eat of those forbidden morcels without the least inconvenience. They likewise forbid us to give certain bones to our dogs, as it would prevent them from killing any more of that animal or make those animals become lean, and a thousand such nonsense too tedious to insert here. **The " Medecine Piece "**

Notwithstanding these supertitious ideas, the Indians think themselves the wisest happiest and the most independent of men ; the greatest compliment they can bestow on a white man is to compare him to an Indian, either in sense or in beauty. To

disapprove their ideas, or argue with them on the absurdity of any of their tenets is only proving yourself a fool, for, if you had sense, you would allow them to be the first people on earth, both in wisdom and knowledge.

Care of the sick

See : Peter Grant, " The *Sauteux* Indians. "

Jongleurs.

What their great Conjurors are most proud of, is when they happen to foretell future events. When they intend to attempt this great feat, they drive four pickets as far as they can in the ground and lash them well together with cross bars till they stand quite firm and solid, so as to form a square of three feet by four feet high : they then cover the whole with blankets or moose skins.

The would—be prophet enters it with only his rattle, and another person appointed by him sits on the outside to put questions and receive the answers. He then begins to make a terrible noise in a language the bystanders cannot understand, and himself neither, probably, and shakes his rattle, imitating the noise of different animals. This part of the performance being over, he answers the questions which may be put to him and which generally relate to the return or whereabouts of absent friends for whose safety they may have been uneasy. These *jongleurs*, as the French call them, are never at a loss with an answer, and will tell you with the greatest assurance or impudence what they are doing at the time. Their answers, sometimes, turn out to be true, but I have more often known them to tell nothing but untruths.

Some of the Canadians, who are almost as superstitious as the Indians themselves, will swear that they most distinctly heard two voices in the jonglery, alluding to the Devil, whom they suppose to be at the bottom of it ; I have often listened and never could hear the old gentlemen's voice.

One of these *jongleurs*, some years ago, laid a wager with me that I might tie him hand and feet with a cod line, and wrap him up with a net from head to foot in any manner I pleased, throw him in his jonglery with his rattle along side of him, and that he would untie himself. I did tie his hands behind his back as hard as I could and tied his legs in several places, then wrapped him up from head to foot in a net, so that he could not move one joint, and threw him into the jonglery with his rattle along side of him, and then covered the whole up.

He immediately began to mutter, changing tone every now and then ; the voice grew louder and louder, but I could not understand a single word he said although I was then pretty well versed in their language. In about sixteen minutes he began to shake his rattle, which made me think his hands were free, and six minutes after, he threw out the net and desired me to examine it and say whether it was cut ; finding the net all right I paid the wager. The men present of course swore the Devil untied him, as it was impossible he could do so himself, but I leave every one free of his own opinion, and will not pretend to say whether the old gentleman had a hand in it, or not.

Early marriages.

The first thing a young man thinks of after he has been initiated in the art of conjuring, after he has become a perfect quack, is to find out a wife, as they all marry very young, especially the women, who are sometimes given away by the father at six or seven years of age. The husband, who is perhaps not above fifteen at the time, will then take her and bring her up himself in order to be sure of her virginity.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE

JOURNAL OF D. CAMERON, Esq

NORTH-WEST COMPANY

WHILE IN THE

NIPIGON DEPARTMENT (1)

1804-1805

The guide started very early with his three canoes from Lake Nipigon, and at 10 o'clock, I sent off the two others, who had just time to get across, when it began to blow very fresh, so that I remained here all day, but I did not care much as I knew very well that we could soon overtake them. **August, 16th.**

We started early and made ten portages where we used to make but four and came through a small lake, not above two miles long, which gave the men four hours very hard labour **Mud lakes.**

(1) This journal was found in so damaged a condition that it required no little pains to put it in order. Several pages were lost and many others had to be entirely omitted. It was probably commenced at the end of July, when the " outfits " generally left the mouth of the Nipigon for the interior, and finished in the spring of 1805, when the " returns " were forwarded to the Grand Portage, which period formed the " trading season. "

This journal has some interest, as it gives an idea of the general character of the country, north of Lake Nipigon, and also of the daily hardships which the traders had to suffer, of their mode of trading and dealing with the Indians.

paddling through mud or *vase*, with not above two inches of water over its surface, the mud rising over the *maitres* on each side with a shocking stench. This is only the beginning, as we have nothing but muddy lakes and portages from here to Osnaburgh, and God knows when we will get out of them, although the distance is not more than 25 leagues. We encamped at Portage *La Petite Chute*.

18th. Discouragement of the men. Nothing but paddling through mud all day. We came up with two canoes that left.. we told them that they went very slowly, but they thought they were doing wonders and going exceedingly well, considering the hardships they met with, and began cursing themselves as blockheads for coming to this " infernal part of the country ", as they called it, and d...ning the person who first attempted this road, where not a drop of pure water could be had to quench their thirst.

I did not mind that much, as I knew it to be their habit whenever they met with any uncommon hardship, and as they were very good, able men, "proud North-West bucks", who never had been this way before, I did not wish to hurt their pride by representing to them at once how easy they were dispirited. I began to cheer them and told them to consider that this was not the only road in which people met with unusual hardship this year, on account of the lowness of the water ; that it was the same all over the country.

They agreed with me that the lowness of the water would add greatly to the carrying in every part of the country, but that carrying from morning till night was nothing compared to paddling through mud, where they sometimes pulled with all their might for a quarter of an hour without being able to gain the length of the canoe. Though fully admiting that their present work was the most fatiguing a man could meet with, I told

them that the only remedy was perseverance and patience so as to get out of it the sooner. We made five portages, but did not travel more than 4 leagues and camped at *Grande Vase*, a portage 22 acres long.

We are obliged to haul the canoes through the mud with tracking lines whenever we can get near the shore. One may drive a pole twenty feet long down to the end in all these muddy lakes in which even the smallest dog cannot swim. We came over 3 portages, 2 of which were long ones, and encamped at *La pêche au Chavaudreuil.* 19th.

It rained the whole day, though not so heavily as I wished, yet enough to force us to lay bye ; the men were so much fatigued that they slept the greater part of the day. 20th.

Clear weather ; we started early and went all day paddling through the mud as usual, making two trips from one portage to the other and once, three. We often came up with the two other canoes and would have passed them had I allowed my men to do it as they are the smartest set of young men I ever had. We had no sight of our guide since he left the *Grand Rapide*, but I know by his *campements* that he is not far ahead. We made 5 portages where, in high water, there is only one. We made 6 leagues of our way, two of which were in the mud and encamped at *La Pêche au gros brochet*, in company with the two other canoes. 21st.

It rained all yesterday and the night before, but not enough to raise the water much. This morning, we carried on slowly through mud stills and amongst many stones ; we landed at *Portage la Savanne*, which we found to be twice the usual length, as there was not a drop of water within eight acres of where 23rd.

we used to load, and very little indeed where we are obliged to load now.

Conjurors. Here the Bird's second son came to us. Having asked him where he was going to, he answered that he came to meet me as my canoes ahead (with whom he parted at the next Portage,) told him that I was nigh. I then asked him, what news? "Very "bad news," said he "my father was conjured to death by some "Indians who had a spite against him, and my oldest brother "has been very ill and can hardly walk yet; all our children "have been very sick and we would have certainly all died "had I not been a great conjuror, for, when I was young, I "dreamt that all this would happen and in what manner I "would prevent the evil resulting therefrom, although their "spite was so great against us that they intended we should all "die."

He went on telling me a long and absurd story about his own abilities as a conjuror, and the wonders he performed by his dreams, which far exceeded Daniel's, had you taken his word for it. I was sorry for the loss of his father, though he was a d......d rascal, both with white people and with Indians, but he was a good hunter, from whom I had above a pack last year, and the Hudson's Bay people as much. He told me his lodges were inland, opposite to where I was to pass, at the head of Osnaburgh Lake, which he left the day before yesterday at the desire of his brother, who told him to come and meet me, to know what advice I would give him and where I wanted him to trade this year if he recovered his health, as I had made him a Chief last spring on account of his good behaviour to my people at *Nid du Corbeau.* I asked him if he would return immediately, he answered that he would camp with us to night.

We at last finished this portage and got our canoes launched into Lake *La Savanne*, which is 4 leagues long and in which we made three portages, and landed at The Portage, which we found the same as the last and twice the usual length. It being impossible to camp here, we left our canoes and pieces and went to the other end with our tents, bedding and provisions, and it was quite dark when the people of the other canoes arrived, with only their bedding and kettles. **Lake *La Savanne*.**

I gave to the Indian who met me yesterday some corn and tobacco for his brother, telling him that I would give no liquor, as he was sick, in case it would make him worse, but that if I found them on my way at the head of Osnaburgh, I would give them some and a little medecine, and tell them where I would leave a trader for them. **24th**

Having passed this Portage, we went on to the next, which is not more than 12 acres distant, and where we had to make two portages in one, as there was not a drop of water between them. This portage was about half a league long through swampy land in which we sunk to our knees ; but, in spite of all, the men of our two canoes exerted themselves so well that all was over at 12 oclock.

From this place we were obliged to make two trips to the next portage, which is about a league distant, and to carry. A man of each canoe remained here to carry while the others went back for the other half. This portage is at least three times the usual length, and we were obliged to make three trips across a little muddy lake almost half a league long, and then to carry from end to end of a place which was formerly a river and which I hope will be one again next spring, but is now as dry as a floor. The men were, however, so anxious to get out of this *enfer*, as they called it, and get once more into clear water, that **Difficult navigation.**

my canoe got to the *Butte de Sable*, at the entrance of Osnaburgh Lake, where I found the guide with his three canoes just put up. The other three canoes could not get here this evening, but Mr. Dougal Cameron came to me by land, with his bed on his back.

This place is not over 60 leagues from Lake Nepigon, and it took us since the 7th inst! There used to be forty-four portages, but there is double that number this year, and, singular to say, never were people, even at sea, deprived of clean drinkable water as we were during that time. But, thank God, we are again in clean clear water.

25th Cloudy weather, with a little rain, which did not prevent the other canoes from coming up with us about 10 oclock, we, however, could not unbale to dry some of the goods which had got wet, nor could we repair our canoes, which much needed it as their bottoms presented a most shabby appearance from the rubs they got on sticks and stones.

Osnaburgh Fort

I went this afternoon to Osnaburgh Fort for some things I had left there last spring and in hopes of meeting Indians, as I am much at a loss how to dispose of the quantity of goods I have here on hand, and which I cannot send to Tront Lake, on account of the lowness of the water.

Kind reception by Mr. Goodwin.

We were very politely received by Mr. Goodwin, second Factor of Albany Fort, whom we found in charge here. Soon after our arrival, two Indians came from Pine Lake, who told us it was with great difficulty they could get through the lakes in their small canoes, as there was no water at all in some of them. I was very anxious to find an opportunity of speaking to them, but it was very difficult, as they were strictly watched by the interpreter. Having been invited by Mr. Goodwin to remain here all night on account of a violent storm and heavy showers

of rain, I managed in the evening to speak to one of them, and invited him to come next day to my tent with his brother ; that I had something to say to them and wished to make them a present, as I well knew that an Indian is very little influenced by words unless those words are accompanied by something more substantial. They promised me to do so

People unacquainted with the nature of the Indian trade will reckon my behaviour very rude and say that I made very ungrateful returns for the polite hospitality I received. I admit that I am not entirely reconciled to the propriety of the conduct, although it is a very common custom in this country, which nothing but the nature of the trade can excuse.

Mr. Goodwin hid some of our things so as to force us to remain till after breakfast, when we took our leave. Although our party was numerous, consisting of Mr. Dougal Cameron and eight men, besides myself, Mr. Goodwin treated us with the utmost liberality. When we left, the two Indians were lying, dead drunk, after having been troublesome and insolent to the English the whole night. Those people have the patience of Job and are real slaves to the Indians who come to their forts. We keep them at greater distance, which makes them more respectful to us than to the English. **Patience of the H. B. Co's people**

On my arrival at the camp, we opened all the bales that were wet and got all the contents of them dried ; we likewise got all the canoes repaired. At 4 o'clock, the two Indians arrived, much to my surprise, as I did not believe Mr. Goodwin would allow them to come. I treated them with a glass of shrub each, which they liked very well ; they said the English were too pitiful to have such a chief's liquor as that. I know that they treated them much better than we could afford to do, but they had not the art of convincing the Indians of that. **The trade.**

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I inquired of them what Indians they had seen of late, which way they intended to hunt this winter, they told me that they would hunt near Cat Lake, and that, if I left a canoe there, they would trade with us. I told them I would if I could depend on seeing them there, as there would be no others to depend upon but themselves, which in fact would be enough for one canoe, as they number fourteen brothers, all men, besides the father and three sons-in-law.

But they are great cheats for their credits; I, in consequence, desired them not to go there till the beginning of winter, as they had every thing they wanted till then from the English, and, as a further inducement for their coming, I told them that I would make them a present of their old debts they owed since the winter before last at Pine Lake. Nothing was lost by the promise, as I was quite sure that we would never see a skin's worth of these old credits. I then gave them a two gal. keg net high wines and three fathoms of tobacco for their friends, desiring them to tell the others every thing I said to them, and telling that if the trade at Cat Lake did not content them in the course of the winter, never to mind that, to wait for me there next spring, and that I would satisfy them myself.

Those Indians are almost strangers to me; I have not the same influence with them as with all the other Indians of the Department, as they seldom dealt with any of us, and only saw me now and then, *en passant.*

27th We started early, the seven canoes together, and went on against a strong head wind which obliged us to lay by for 3 hours, so that we only travelled 10 leagues, a little over half the lake.

28th Dull cloudy weather, still blowing pretty fresh; we went on as fast as we could, my canoe leading the way, and, at 8 oclock,

I found the Indians whom I met on the 24th. The sick man was fast recovering, but still being very weak, he asked me for same medecine and I gave him some lozenges &c, turlington, to stop the spitting of blood; I likewise gave them some corn, as they had nothing to eat but blueberries and wild cherries, of which they gave us more than we wished.

The other canoes soon arrived and put ashore to know if I wanted any thing, but as I did not desire to unbale any thing here, I told them that they might make the best of their way to the Portage, yet 5 leagues off, as there was appearance of rain, and the wind was gradually increasing.

I then asked the Indian where he intended to hunt this winter, he told me that, as there were many beavers hereabouts, he would pass the winter between this and a lake he named, at 30 leagues ahead on our route. I disliked to see him hunt so near Osnaburgh and wished to prevail on him to go where he was last year, but he said they ruined all the beaver in that quarter before they left it, and, if he went there, none of them would be able to pay their credits. I then told him to follow us as far as Portage Plé, and if I found any Indians there, as I expected, we would then consult together where it would he more convenient for them to have a house, as they were too few here to leave a canoe, which, besides, would be making opposition to *Lac Seul*, which is not far from this, and Mr. R. Cameron is to be there.

He consented to follow me there to know where I would leave a canoe and take credits, since I would not give them any here, but asked me for some liquor to get drunk, which they reckon the most efficacious medecine of all to cure every disease, and in fact sends a great many to their grave. But example has no effect upon them, their desires must be gratified at any cost. I granted his request, but telling him at the same time that drinking was contrary to his present state of health. Love of liquor.



It now blew very hard, but we kept up to windward as much as possible, among a number of islands; when we got clear of them, we hoisted about a yard of sail which bore us before the wind at a great rate. We saw the five other canoes sheltered in a bay to the right of us, the wind being to nigh to their left side they were obliged to lay by, which they well deserved as they were entirely out of the way, instead of keeping to windward as we did. I was astonished to find the falls which we often ran down with half loaded canoes, entirely dry.

30th The rain kept us here the whole day yesterday, but the weather having cleared up this afternoon, I ordered the men to load the 2 canoes, that we might get past before dark some ugly stony shoals, about a league long, which were ahead of us. The water having risen three inches since the 28th we went on slowly among the stones and were obliged to make two portages in places where we had never carried before. The oldest Indians in the country say that they never saw the water so low before.

We were here overtaken by a violent storm of wind, hail and rain which we were obliged to endure on the water, the water being so shallow all around us that there was no possibility of reaching the shore ; it was with great difficulty we prevented our canoes from being dashed to pieces against the rocks. We, however, got out safe and encamped on an island, where the Indians came up with us. I asked them if they saw my canoes, they said no, that they kept to the left to be under the lee, as the waves ran very high...

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SEPTEMBER 2d Chief "Cotton shirt." We started on the 31 ult. without waiting for the other canoes, as I expected to find Indians soon, who would detain me, and this morning, at 9, we entered *Lac des Ecorces* where I found

the Indians I expected, with a few others. We had hardly pitched our tents when they came to us, making the usual demand for tobacco; I gave them each about 6 inches, and having asked them where they intented to winter, one of them, which the white men have named "Cotton shirt," said that he was waiting here for me to ask for a trader and a canoe to be left at *Portage Plélé*, where he said that the men would find plenty white fish to maintain themselves, and that he, as well as the others, intended to hunt hereabout, which is the only place they know where a few beavers remain. It is a general complaint in the whole department that beaver is getting very scarce.

"Cotton shirt" has always been very faithful to me these several years past, he is, without exception, the best hunter in the whole department, and passes as having, in consequence, great influence over me. One of his elder brothers spoke next and said that he was now grown up a man; that "his Fort," as he calls Osnaburgh, was too far off for the winter trade, that if I left any one here, he would come to them in winter with skins; he could not live without getting drunk 3 or 4 times at least, but that I must leave a clerk to deal with him, as he was above trading with any young understrappers. I told him that if I consented to leave a person here, I would leave one that had both sense and knowledge enough to know how to use him well, as also any other great man. **A haughty Chief.**

This Indian has been spoiled by the H. B. people at Osnaburgh Fort, where he may consider himself master; having been invited there to dine last spring, I saw him sitting at table with us, and not satisfied with getting himself a share of every thing on the table, acted the "landlord" by giving shares to his people who were around, without any one finding fault with him. I then told them to go and smoke a while in their lodges, and that I would send for them when ready with an answer, as I

never spoke my mind empty handed as they did. They all answered that they were pitiful at present, otherwise they would not have spoken to me in that pitiful manner. They went to their lodges and I got 4 two. gal. kegs mixed, as there were 4 of them who reckoned themselves chiefs, but, in general, the chiefs in this part of the country are the greatest rogues among them, for if an Indian is a good hunter, and has the usual large stock of impudence which they generally have, with a little cunning, you must make a chief of him to secure his hunt, otherwise your opponents will debauch him from you, and you are sure to lose him.

Trading chiefs.

They are all remarkably proud of being reckoned great men, but still they have little or no influence over the others, for, after making the father a chief, you are sometimes obliged to do the same with his son in order to secure his hunt, for the former has not power enough over him to secure it for you, let him be however so willing. They only have some influence when they get a keg of rum from their trader to treat the others with, and can get plenty of ammunition and tobacco to share with them.

They are great men while that lasts, but as the Indians, in general, have very little sense of gratitude in their nature, when the chief has nothing to bestow on them, all past favors are forgotten and his influence is at an end till he has it in his power to begin again. I often saw them get a good beating from them they were treating and some time getting their noses bit off, which was the case a few weeks ago with this great English partisan, whose nose was bit off by his son-in-law at the door of what he calls " his fort." He is not yet cured and says that a great man like him must not get angry or take any revenge, especially when he stands in awe of the person who ill used

him, for there is nothing an Indian will not do rather than admit himself to be a coward.

Being ready, I sent for them ; they all came, as they knew it was to receive and not to give ; I, however, got 23 skins credits from them. As soon as they were placed, I treated them with a bottle of shrub of which they thought a great deal, and then made them a speech on the usual topics, thanking them that behaved well to my people last year, and telling them that while they continued so to behave, I would take care they should never want wherewith to cover themselves from the inclemencies of the weather and bring up their children. They were very proud of this compliment being paid them in presence of the other Indians.

The compliments being over, I began to animadvert with the others on their inconsistency and the false promises that some of them had made me before, and that it was perhaps with a view to deceive me again that they wanted me to leave people there, and no sooner would they have received sufficient to enable to pass the winter, they would forget they were holding my goods, iron works or ammunition for their hunt, and only think of taking their skins to Osnaburgh or elsewhere without paying above half of their credits, or considering in the least the liquor, ammunition, knives, flints, &c. bestowed upon them in the course of the fall, winter and spring, while the English were at a distance and making no expense for them. Still I was sure they would expect from me, next spring, as if I had bestowed on them nothing more than the English. That if I was to give them all that they would cost in the course of the season at one time, they would find that I was far more liberal than the English ever were. **Trading interviews and conferences.**

I told them I would look upon as chiefs or great men only such as were proud of their word, as it was beneath a great

man to tell a lie or make a false promise, it was for that reason they never saw me guilty of not performing my promises. That I would be very happy to leave people with them if they all promised to be faithful to me, or at least pay their credits : that they would find that I knew better than the English how to reward those that behaved well, an evident proof of that was that I always got a larger share of the trade than any of the English who were alongside of me these fifteen winters, although the Indians from whom I had that share these last seven years were brought up by the people of York Fort and Severn, and never saw any one from the French till they saw me. " We know, " said the Osnaburgh chief, " that you got " the best share of the trade wherever you wintered, and if you " will remain here yourself, you well get every skin of our " hunt. "

Indians discouraged from fishing.

I told them I was very sorry I could not remain, as I had yet several posts to arrange on the way, which was the reason which always obliged me to go to the furthest posts, but that the person I intended to leave would use them as well as I could, and that the strouds, blankets and other articles cut and measured by him would be just as good as cut and measured by me, and that if they did not think themselves well used by him, never to mind that, nor leave the post, as I would myself make them ample amends for their good behaviour on my arrival here, next spring. That I knew some of them, would always be true to me as heretofore, and that I did not mean them, as I knew their hearts and minds to be the same as mine.

The English Chief, who knew he had no share in this compliment, thought of revenging himself upon me by saying that I made my packs more with my tongue and speeches than with my liberality ; that I received an Indian well, but never gave him too much, " a proof of that " says he " is that, of two of your

" chiefs, my brother and brother-in-law, none of them has a net " to set, although they both seem very fond of fish when they " get some from me. The English always give me two nets " every spring, but you never give your chiefs any." I replied that I would be sorry to despise my chiefs so much as to use them like old woman in giving them nets to live on when they were such good hunters and could always maintain themselves like men with their guns. Therefore, instead of nets, I always gave them ammunition, which was a much dearer article. He answered that he got ammunition as well as them but was glad to eat fish now and then, moreover, the best hunters could not sometimes find animals to kill " However " said he " you " shall not call me a chief next spring, for whatever I will " take here I will pay for before going anywhere else, but as you " dislike them who tell you lies, I tell you before hand that I " must go to Osnaburgh next spring to pay my credits and keep " the Indians in order about my Fort.

I told him he now spoke like a Chief, and that as he was one of those who asked for a house here, I expected he would encourage his young men to pay their credits, and not entice any other Indians to go with him to Osnaburgh, in that case I should use him like a chief, and clothe him as such on my way out, next spring.

They then all began to make promises of behaving well ; this was just what I wanted, as I was determined from the beginning to leave a canoe here and only wanted to be enticed to it by them, so as to have a better hold on them. I accordingly told them I would leave a canoe, especially as "Cotton shirt" and those who came along with him desired it, and gave them the 4 two gal. kegs, desiring them to drink quietly and not to come and trouble me when they were drunk, as I would be very busy on the arrival of my canoes, which I hourly expected, in making

the outfit for this place. They then left me, went to their lodges and began their frolic. My canoes arrived in the evening.

I would not have enlarged so much on this subject which will undoubtedly appear nonsensical to the reader who is acquainted with business, but which may have some interest to those who have no idea of the manner in which the business of this country is carried on.

3rd. I began to make the outfit for this place, which I gave in charge to Régiste Bellefleur, much against his will, as his pride was very much hurt by the Osnaburg Chief, who would not acknowledge him to be a *great man ;* the Canadians whom we raise from are inferior station to a higher one are just as vain of being reckoned "great men" as the Indians themselves, but very seldom adopt the means necessary for their advancement. Vanity, selfishness, and drunkeness soon spoil the greater part of them. However, I had no one else to leave but Mr. Cameron, who is much wanted elsewhere I gave him four good men, among whom is Michel Forcier, who is to act as his assistant, as he is the ablest man for that purpose in the whole brigade.

Indian and *Voyageur* pride.

I was greatly troubled by the Indians all day ; they had now things to say which they could not say yesterday when they were sober, besides repeating what they had told me twenty times over. I, therefore, hastened to get the outfit ready, much against their will, the bales made up, the canoes loaded, and gave orders to the guide for tomorrow morning.

4th A fine day. The guide started very early with the brigade, and Mr. Dougall Cameron and myself remained here waiting for an Indian who was hourly expected, and with whom I had a bone to pick before I left this, an account of his daring misbehaviour to some of our people last spring, and in hopes to prevent him from attempting to do the same in future, and, likewise, to

give the Indians, who were now sober, their credits, which they all took in the course of the day to the number of 500 skins, which I thought enough at present for so few of them, although they would willingly take as much more, if I consented to give them.

The Indian I expected soon arrived. I reprimanded him severely for his past conduct, and warned him what the consequences would be to himself if he attempted to behave in the like manner again. I then gave the whole of them a nine gal. keg of mixt high wines, encouraging them once more to pay their credits, behave well with their traders and not to expect any more liquor from him unless they hunted something for it.

We started from where we left Bellefleur and arrived on the 6th, at 8 o'clock in the morning, at —Lake, where I found Jean Bte Sauvé, one of our half gentlemen, who had arrived a few days ago from Big Lake with a letter from Mr. McFarlane, letting me know that the "Suckers," ten men in number, had not been there last spring to pay their credits, but had gone down to Severn Fort with all their hunt since the begining of January last. He likewise tells me that he thought it would be impossible for us to get to the white fishing place, as the rivers and small lakes were in some places quite dry. 6th

I remarked to Sauvé, who was telling me that it would take us twenty days to perform what was generally done in seven, that after what we had already surmounted, we feared no road, as we could find none worse; that a summer man was no judge of what a smart set of men as I had there could do, and that I would lay bet with him or any person that we would get there in ten days at the utmost. "You must have men that can do "wonders then," said he, "we could not come along with our "small canoes without carrying them in places where even the "big canoes had never unloaded before."..............................

The Indian who accompanied Sauvé followed him with his

family not only for the purpose of serving as guide, but in order to be out of the way of his only brother, whom he had dangerously stabbed in a drinking match last spring in this place, where they had waited for me to pay the rest of their credits and be clothed. This accident arrived about two hours after I left them ; these two brothers appeared to love each other as any brothers I have known since I first came to this country.

As it was raining very hard, we were obliged to remain here all day doing very little, as I could not unbale to make the outfit I intended to leave here, according to the promise I made to the Indians I saw at Osnaburgh. I consequently passed part of the day conversing with the Indians, especially with Mr. Sauvé's guide, to whom I gave some liquor which he drank very quietly. I reprimanded him for what he did to his brother, he told me he did not know what he was doing and knew nothing of it when he recovered his senses and found his brother so ill, till his wife told him all about it.

In the afternoon, I named the four men who are to remain with Mr. Sauvé, and told the guide that, as the water was so low, I would leave no canoe here, but take a man out of each of his four canoes, and that the assortment I intended to leave here would lighten them of seven pieces each, which would enable them to go through the shoal places easier than with their full loads and a fifth man ; that Mr. Dougle Cameron and myself would continue in our canoes as usual with our full load and manage the best we could. I spent the rest of this rainy day in giving Mr. Sauvé all the instructions required, and communicated to him the arrangement made with the Indians at Osnaburgh.

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(1) Several pages missing.

I asked this Indian's son if he knew the road, he told me he did, and I told them then that he and his cousins must go......... .... English were there and must make all the haste they could......... and meet me at Fly Lake, that I would pay them well for their pains. They were not very willing, but I prevailed on them to consent and told Mr. Munro that he must go along with them, to hurry them on, as well as to give me an account of how the road is. The old man asked me why I was so anxious to know whether they were there or not. I told him if they were there, I would go myself alongside of them ; he said that if I went, he would go too; but I wanted to persuade him from it, as there was no opposition at Big Lake, where his skins would be got cheaper than alongside of the English, especially as he was indebted to them since last year and gave them a share of his hunt, last year, for which I gave him a proper set down. However, he insisted on going along with me. He is a very wild fellow and not easily managed by E but with me he is, without exception, the best Indian in the country, at least I found he was so for 3 years I was trading with him alongside of the English, but Mr. McFarlane and he cant agree...... 22nd

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....

I wrote a few lines by him to Mr. McFarlane to send me the credits of some Indians I named him and which I supposed to be that way. Could not finish this long portage today.

Early in the morning I went to rouse up the men who were to go with Mr. Munro, which was no easy thing, as they had been drunk all night and are still ; however, I got them off at last, desiring Munro to make all the haste he could, and not show himself to the English, should they be there. I told the young men not to let any one know that he was with them or what they were there for; not to allow themselves to be detained 23rd

on any account, and that I would reward them well on their return if they acted faithfully.

This evening I got to Portage Laf , but the guide did not come up with the two other canoes as he had a man lame in each of them who were not as smart and ambitious as the men with me.

24th We went on, without waiting for the guide, through an ugly shoal river, full of sticks and stones, in which we were obliged to make several portages more than usual. Here I came to the *Grande Outarde's* loge ; I took some dried meat which he desired me to ask his sister for, an old widow woman who remained here to take care of the children and lodge ; after this we went on as fast as we could to get to the place where I was to wait for Munro, being desirous of getting out of this troublesome river. We got there late in the evening, after a hard days work.

25th Some rain ; my canoes came up in the afternoon, but one of them, Laplante's "St Louis", got very bad usage and was torn in two places in this river. This is the third canoe he has worn almost out since Lake Superior, although he is a Grand River bowman. We have to remain here doing nothing and waiting with impatience the return of Munro, whom we only expect on the 28th.

A cloudy cold day ; about six, we heard the report of a gun not far off, which I immediately answered, and a few moments after I saw a heave in sight which, to my satisfaction, turned out to be Mr. Munro and the two young men who went with him. He told me that the English were in fact building where I had been told, that the road was very bad. After having requested him not to say a word about that to the men, I asked him if he knew what Indians were there, he told me to ask his

guide, as he did not understand him very well, and that he would certainly tell me all, as one of the young men saw his father, who is the greatest Chief the English have in that quarter and from whom he got all the news, without even going near the house.

Vicious dispositions of the Natives.

The guide stated that he hid himself near the lodge which was about four miles from the house, and that the young men were faithful to my orders. They did not remain in the *loge* over twenty minutes, although he was the father of the one and uncle of the other. I then began to question the young men, who told me of all the Indians who had been there, seven in number. Having asked them about an Indian called "the Cedar," they told me that the Indians supposed him dead by this time of a bruising he got about a month ago from a brother of his in a drinking frolic, that he could neither stand nor walk when they left him, two of his ribs being broken and his breast shockingly bruised.

This occurred at a place where the Indians of that quarter were waiting for the English. So soon as the latter had got all they could from the Indians and given them liquor, they thought it more prudent to go and camp further on, to be out of their reach, as they are the greatest ruffians to be met in this country, especially with the English, whom they certainly use very ill. They killed one of their traders five years ago, and instead of having punished the murderer, he is one of their greatest chiefs at present: it is not, therefore, surprising if the Indians are daring with them.

I then inquired about the brother who so cruelly used his brother. His name is "The Big Eyes," and it would appear that the ruffian crippled himself under the most shockingly brutal circumstances, which I shall relate, as it gives an idea of the character of those Indians. In the night time as he was sitting in a dark *loge* or wigwam, and seeing another person sitting before

him, he took up his axe and, without the least provocation and without even knowing who the person was, whether his son or wife, he struck a blow, with the intention of splitting his scull. But as good luck would have it, the devil, it seems, was playing his share in this mischievous design; he missed his intended victim and struck himself straight on the knee ball, which he split in two. A just punishment for his treacherous designs.

27th. I set to work and divided the goods. I fitted a loaded canoe for the Lake of the Islands under the charge of Mr. Munro, with six men; another canoe for Owl Lake, with only a small assortment, but still as much as the place could pay for; this I gave in charge to Joseph Monier, the guide, who is a very careful, honest man, but has very little talents with Indians, although he has been a long time in this country. I gave him the only man I had who could speak Indian, to be his interpreter and four other men besides.

Mr Munro has an interpreter, also, who summered with him and is now in charge of the goods at Lake of the Islands during Mr. Munro's absence, so that these two posts are well arranged, and have at least as much goods as they can make returns for; they will be easily managed, as I left the Indians last spring on a very good footing and much attached to me. There still remains 17 pieces of trading goods, which, with my provisions and 7 men (as I have taken one out of the guide's canoe,) will make a heavy loaded canoe, with which I intend to attempt this bad road, to get alongside my old neighbours, the English, in the hope of taking a few packs from them, in order to help me to keep up the usual average of returns from this Department, which would be impossible were I to confine myself within the usual limits, as beaver is getting too scarce.

This morning, I sent two men to the *Grande Outarde* with his son, as I supposed him by this time returned from Big Lake,

which was only six leagues off, to bring all the leather I saw in his lodge, as my men were out of shoes, and also for a small canoe which he must sell me. I provided his son well for the voyage before I sent him back. The men came back in the evening without either leather or canoe, but told me that the Indian and his whole party was coming to follow me, and that, as they were too much crowded in their canoes, they were obliged to leave some of their things. This gave me no hope of getting a canoe from him.

He arrived a few minutes after and gave me the credits I desired Mr. McFarlane to send me. I then prevailed on him to give me all the leather they had, which was only 1½ dressed moose skins. I also obtained the canoe, though with more reluctance, but I could admit of no refusal, being too much in need of one. He told me he could not, after giving his canoe, stir from this; as they were already too much crowded in four how could they stow themselves in three. As this argument did not suit my purpose, I did not seem to understand it, and told him to make two trips between each portage as I have been obliged to do several times this summer.

The last thing I did was drawing a chart of the road for Mr. Munro, who was afraid losing his way after having parted with the guide, although he passed there twice this summer and one of his men has been there as often as myself. I wish the road I am going through may be no more difficult than that, and I shall want no guide to bring me out next spring.

A cold cloudy day. Mr. Munro and Monier left together; they are to follow the same course for five day's march, and then the former will continue his course north, and have an ugly swampy portage of seven miles to cross, then another shoal river and eight more portages to go through. I, therefore, instructed him to take a man from Monier's canoe when they 28th. He leaves for the interior.

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separated, so that he might get on faster for fear of being ice locked as I had been two years ago in the same road. The guide will then have to ascend a large river, his course being W S. W. and will not encounter the same difficulties.

I told them I would go in a small canoe and meet them next spring, if I lived, at their parting place, to settle the next summer's affairs and speak to the Indians once more before I left the country. We got our canoes loaded and took our leave of each other, my course being to the west.

My canoe was very much lumbered ; I put a man and his wife in the small canoe and embarked in the other small canoe with my guides, after giving some liquor to the old man and his sons who must remain here to-day to try and pack all in their three canoes.

Accident; ammunition damaged.

We went on as well as we could against a cold head wind till the big canoe got on a stone which nearly upset her and tore a piece two feet square out of her bottom. She filled immediately and the men and goods were all in danger of going to the bottom before they reached the shore ; notwithstanding their efforts, she sank in three feet of water.

We hastened to get everything out of her, but my sugar and their molasses was damaged, but worse than all, my powder, which I immediately examined, was considerably damaged ; I did not dare let the men know this last misfortune, as it would have discourage them. It took us only three hours to repair and reload the canoes, yet this accident threw a gloom on this voyage, and the men, with their superstitious ideas, said that such an accident, at the very outset, was a sure sign that this road would be an unfortunate one for us, but I ridiculed the idea in such a manner that I heard no more of it. The canoe was now deeper loaded than ever as the bales were all wet, we got to the

first portage only after sunset. It was cold and freezing very hard.

Very cold in the morning, all the bays taken with ice ; we made 2 portages before breakfast which gave us a deal of work as we then thought, but now we are come to the 3rd, which will make us work in earnest, and God knows when we will have done with it. **OCTOBER, 4th. Difficulties of the voyage.**

In order to find the best way out, I went with one of my guides to the top of a high hill which was on the right hand, at about the middle of the portage, and from which I could see the water at both ends, I never saw such a place before ; the fallen wood is equally thick from one end to the other. I had to employ all hands twenty four hours to make a road about half a league long, and we had every thing across on the 30th, at 2 oclock.

Last evening, the *Grande Outarde* came up to us with no less than fourteen Indians, young and old, with all their lumber in three canoes. I asked him if there was no other road by which the portages were less difficult to make, as it would take us till all the lakes were fast with ice to make the portage in this road ; he told me that by leaving this road by which Mr. Munro returned and making two portages, neither of which being very long, that I would fall into the road by which the English went to Lac Carriboux, which would again bring me into the road by which I went out from Wind Lake, which went through the lake I was going to.

I determined to take that road though it was farther round about, he said he would go by another road in which he hoped to find a few beavers. I desired him to take his time and be in no hurry to come to me till he hunted every thing he found on the way. As the English had already got every thing the Indians had, I would be badly off for want of parchment to make

snowshoes, and I had only them to depend on, so that they must not come till they have some. They promised to do their best and we parted again.

His arrival; poor prospect.

I continued going on as hard as I could, as the weather was getting very cold, with frost and snow. Arrived today at the longed for place, where I found the Hudson's Bay people. six in number, who had not done building yet, although they have been a month here. They gave me a very bad account of the fishing in this lake and said they would have already starved, had it not been for the provisions they brought with them and some meat they got from the Indians. This was bad news for me, as I had only two kettles of corn remaining, but I was pretty well provided with nets, hooks and lines, and well accustomed to places where every shift must be made to get over the long and inclement winters of this country, so that I have still good hopes of weathering out this one as usual, for I have now been twenty years in this country, and so fortunate, that I never lost a man by starvation in any place. although I have been, and am now, in some of the worst posts of the country, for living.

H. B. Co's competition.

Improvidence of the North-Westers.

It was useless for me to enquire from the English about the Indians. They could not conceal their surprise on seeing me arrive, and the master said very simply that it was useless for them to try to hide themselves while I remained in the country, as I would always find them out. "So, said I, "you came here "in hope of being out of the way of opposition," he admitted he did and said he might have put up at a far better place for living and have the same Indians, but that he thought this a place where no one would find him or his Indians out, and, if they did, he thought no one would venture to put up here for fear of starvation, as we never brought any supply of provisions with us for our men. This language so provoked me, that I told

him I was in hopes of living as well as they, if not better, in spite of their pork and flour, and had, in some places, lived far better than they did when in opposition to them, and that, although Mr. Munro had been starving along side of him last winter, at Wind Lake, while he had plenty, that that was no rule, as he was a green hand in the country.

I immediately had a few nets mounted and appointed 2 men to attend to them exclusively with the small canoe I brought along with me, and without which I would be very badly off, as there is no possibility of getting any here. I then looked for a place to build and told the men to have their axes ready to begin to-morrow, as we had no time to lose. I paid my guides handsomely and sent them off with a gal. keg net High wines, to go and look out for the English Chief, who was father of one of them and uncle to the other, whose father died last year.

We all set to work : four men to build, one to square boards for the doors timber for the floors and shelves for the shop, the two others, to attend the net. In the evening, my guide's father arrived with another Indian and their families ; they told me they were sorry they did not know of my coming here before they paid such large credits to my neighbours, but they promised to do whatever they could for me. I received them well and spoke to them in the usual manner, in hopes of having a share of their hunt. 5th. Establishment of a fort.

The *Grande Outarde* arrived with all his family ; his wife was very sick, for which I am sorry, as it will prevent him from doing any thing, so long as she continues so. They brought me six green beavers, two otters and a hairy deer skin ; in the evening, two other Indians arrived, but brought only two skins, which I got. The liquor trade.

There are now eight Indians here, all drunk and very troublesome to my neighbour, who, I believe, is as drunk as themselves; they are all very civil to me, and so they may, for I am giving them plenty to drink, without getting anything from them as yet. They all take some credits from me and make very fair promises, but time alone will say whether they are sincere.

We are going pretty well with our building, but very poorly with the fishing, for we can hardly take what will make one meal a day, and I have already been obliged to give some flour to the men.

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11th. We got all the Indians away from this place. The *Grande Outarde's* wife continues to be very ill, and I beleive will not get over it, which will be a loss to me.

....

17th. An Indian from Red Lake arrived here with one of my guides and one of Mr. Adhemar's men who left that place, the 18th of last month, to come in quest of Indians who owe debts there since last spring. He found some of them, but got nothing from them as yet. As he expected to return soon when he left the house, he brought no clothes with him, and, I suppose, left very little behind, as he has all the appearance of a real *panier percé.* He wished me to assist him and another man he left at the *loge* with each a suit of clothes to serve them till they went back, which would be about the latter end of January. I assisted them accordingly and asked him if Mr. Adhemar would not require them, or be uneasy about them up to that time: he said not, that there were men enough at the house and that the Indians they were with would not take them back till they had hunted half their credits; one of them owed 100 skins to Mr.

Adhemar, but when he heard I was so near, he told them he would go and see his "father" as he called me. Is adopted as Father.

I sent Mr. Adhemar's men and the Indians with my Iroquois to live along with them as we were hard up for provisions, and as two of the Indians who took credits from me were in the gang and would be here about Christmas, I desired the Indian who adopted me as his Father to use Mr. Adhemar's men well, and to help them to get as many of his credits as came on their way, and that he would be well rewarded for it. 19th.

This man tells me that the English, the X. Y. and Mr. Adhemar were striving who would squander most and, thereby, please the Indians best, but the consequence will be that the Indians will get all they want for half the value and laugh at them all, in the end. He told me that an Indian, who I know very well to have no influence on any one but himself, got 5 kegs of mixt high wines to himself alone between the three houses and took 200 skins credits; that all the Indians were 15 days without getting once sober. Ruinous competition.

I leave it to any rational being to judge what that Indian's skins will cost; he must give at least as much more liquor to get his skins from him. Besides being twice paid in dry goods, he and his wife must be clothed and must get several other presents over their bargain, such as tobacco, ammunition, knives, awls, needles, flints &c, all of which cost money, so that his skins will cost at least three times their value. This is not the only instance, but only one out of many at present, so that, if no arrangements take place soon to prevent this squandering and put the trade on a better footing, it will require but a very short time to sink more money than has been gained in the country for several years back.

Its effects on the Indians.

The Indians have lost all industry and are becoming careless about hunting and paying their credits, as they very well know that when one will refuse, another more extravagant will readily give. They now get a quantity of things so easily that they have grown quite extravagant and put no value on goods at all, supposing that, if those goods were so valuable, we would not so easily part with them, and begin to think that their skins are become so valuable that there is no possibility of satisfying them, for they will tell you that such a one offered them so and so, and that they expected you to give the same since you wanted skins.

It is now useless to tell them that those people only come to deceive them out of spite, against us, that they were all men we would not employ, that they would soon be pitiful and be obliged to leave the country, they answer that we told them so several years ago, but that instead of leaving the country they are getting more numerous every year, which would not be the case, if the few packs they made did not satisfy and pay them for all they gave for it. Although we always told them that those people were throwing away their goods to mislead the Indians, that, now, they begin to perceive that we were imposing upon them to get their skins for nothing as we did formerly, and render them poor and pitiful as they had always been till those charitable people came among them.

Decline of the trade.

Notwithstanding all these complaints and arguments against us, we still get the three-fourths of the trade. But I am sorry to say that, even if there were no opposition at all in the country to spoil the trade, it is now getting so barren and poor that in a dozen of years hence, the returns from it will be so triffling that, even if one company had the whole, on the cheapest terms, it will be little enough to pay the expenses of carrying on the business, for the hunt is declining very fast, and we are obliged every

year to make new discoveries and settle new posts. Even with all that, we cannot keep the former average of returns, although the consummation of goods is increasing every year, and I believe that our discoveries are now about at an end, and that the trade cannot be extended much further than it is at present.

Another circumstance which will tend to injure the trade very much, so long as we have the Hudson's Bay Company against us, is the premium they allow every Factor or Master on whatever number of skins they obtain. Those people do not care at what price they buy or whether their employers gain by them so long as they have their premium, which sets them in opposition to one another almost as much as they are to us. The Honorable Hudson's Bay Company's proprietors very little knew their own interest when they first allowed this interest to their "Officers," as they call them, as it certainly had not the desired effect, for, if it added some to their exertions, it led in a greater degree to the squandering of their goods, as they are, in general, both needy and selfish. The Premium system.

We got in our building, which is now weather proof, but not finished in the inside; it is 40 feet long and 20 wide, divided into a room and bed room for myself, a shop and a room for my men, 10 feet long on the whole breadth of the house. The only good material I found here to build is excellent loam, very white, which enabled us to make the house very warm and make two good chimneys. I had, and have still, to do my share of the labour, as the men are very unhandy about building, but, still, we shall have a tolerably neat house for this part of the world. 27th. Traders houses.

I begin to be afraid that we shall be much in want of the principal things to make the inside comfortable, as my men Fear of starvation,

who were trying for a fall fishing returned today and only got 400 fish in all, so that, if the lake is no better in winter than now, which is very seldom in any lake, the Lord have mercy upon us, for we shall be in a sad situation, as I expect no assistance from the Indians who are all starving already themselves.

A Fall fishery.

Some people who may peruse this may desire to know what a fall fishing means and how the fish is preserved without salt. I shall describe both as well as I can.

In the month of October, the white fish run up from the deep waters to spawn on shoal banks and on sandy and gravelly bottoms, or to the shoal entrance of a river where there is some current, which is some time preferable, as they resort in greater numbers to the last, when it can be found. Here, a variety of other fish gather to feed on the roes of the white fish, so that, in a good spawning place, they sometimes get two or three hundred fish in one night. We select the best of these places and visit them several times while the spawning continues, both to take out the fish from the nets and to untangle them.

We then pierce the fish with the point of a knife through the bone, at about two inches from the tail and string them by tens on a twisted willow branch, then hang them on poles, with their heads downwards, in a shady place. The slime drops down and they will keep in this manner exceedingly well ; some people even prefer them to fresh fish if they do not endure too much warm weather before they freeze, in which case they take a strong rank taste.

November 17th.

Love of liquor.

The weather continues very warm for the season, much more so than last month, but we are getting no fish, although the lake stands as free of ice as in July, so that we are obliged to live on the few fish we caught last month, which will not last us long. Some of the Indians pay us a visit now and then, but with little

or nothing, and still they expect that we must receive them and give them something every time they come, just the same as if we had not seen them these two months and as if they brought us one pack each. They seem to think of nothing else but getting drunk, and think, now, that there ought to be no more sparing of our liquor with them than if we took it at the water side ; boys of about twelve years old are as anxious for it as their fathers, and the women more so, if possible, than either.

I soon got tired of this extravagant custom and spoke to them about it in a manner which, I hope, will make them attend better to their hunt, and bring something worth a dram when they come, otherwise, they would get none from me, as I very well knew that, after drinking my liquor, they would leave me without regard to what they already got, and take their furs where they would get more ; that it was not for my use that I was sparing, as they well knew I was not a drunkard, but for any of them that did want it, and that they would always find liquor whenever they brought any thing.

I also perceived that my neighbour was getting tired of this custom as well as myself, for he only gave with reluctance and for fear they would leave him entirely, as they often threatened to do when he refused them anything.

Two Indians arrived with my Iroquois and Mr. Adhemar's 19th.
men ; they brought me 70 skins and as much meat as will make a St Andrews feast for us all, of which we are much in need, as we caught very few fish in this month.

Although this is the coldest weather I ever saw in this coun- The climate.
try at this time of the year, (indeed, ever since 1797,) there has not been over three feet of snow on the ground, and the springs are milder than usually before that time. I leave it for some of the learned to account for that, as I am not qualified to do it, it is not owing to any improvement of cultivation or otherwise,

for the country is now in the same wild state it was in when I first came to it.

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30th. A cold day at last, with some snow. I invited my neighbour to breakfast and dine with me for the first time, and gave him good Madeira to drink at dinner, but I believe he would have preferred high wines, to which he is accustomed. Mr. Adhemar's men remained here with the Indians, and I wrote to him, as also to Mr. Randall Cameron, by them, giving all the news.

DECEMBER. 2nd. Mr. Adhemar's men went away with two Indians to whom I gave two gallons of net high wines, and desired them to take good care of these men and take them to Red Lake as soon as possible, in case Mr. Adhemar should want them, or be anxious about them, as they have now been absent a long time without his hearing.

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(1) This is all that could be found of this journal.



Mr. PETER GRANT

THE

SAUTEUX INDIANS

ABOUT 1804

I

Extent of the Saulteux Country.—The climate and productions.—Animals.—Lakes and rivers ; mode of navigation.—The Canadian *Voyageurs.*

II

The Natives ; their personal appearance and dress.—Their ideas of love and courtship.—Marriages.—Polygamy.—Care and education of children.—Infants' dress.—Parental love.—Their notions of politeness.—Their passions.

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Mr PETER GRANT (1)

THE

SAUTEUX INDIANS

I

Extent of the Saulteux Country.—The climate and productions. —Animals.—Lakes and rivers; mode of navigation.—The Canadian *Voyageurs.*

The immense territories possessed, at present, by the different tribes of *Sauteux* in the North-West extend from *Sault Ste Marie*, in a north-west course, to *Lac Ouinipique*, a computed tract of about 1770 miles, bounded, on the north-east, by Nipigon and

Extent of the *Sauteux* country.

(1) Mr. Peter Grant engaged in the fur trade when still very young, and was admitted in the North-West Company, as a clerk, at its beginning, in 1784. In 1791, he had already attained the object of his ambition, a seat at the board as Partner, and was given charge of the important post of *Lac la Pluie* and, afterwards, the superintendance of the Red River department, in which he passed most of the years he spent in the North-West.

His sketch of the Saulteux Indians, the most complete and elaborate of all those furnished to Mr. Roderic MacKenzie, proves him to have been a man of considerable attainments, a good writer and one of the keenest observers which the North-West Company had among its members.

Mr. Grant, on leaving the North-West, settled at Ste Anne, Bout de l'Ile, and afterwards removed to Lachine, where he died, in 1848, at the grand old age of eighty-four.—Rev. Robert Campbell, " History of the St Gabriel street church. "

the limits of Hudson's Bay, on the south-west, by the south side of Lake Superior, in a line to the head of the Mississipi, from thence, in a westerly course, to the Red River, at about one hundred and fifty miles from where it empties in *Lac Ouinipique.* The frequent emigration of several of their tribes to the country of Assiniboines and Crees make it difficult to ascertain the real boundaries of their present possessions.

Though no people are more attached to their native soil, yet the abundance of game, the ease and facility with which they live and procure the friendship of those nations, who are remarkable for the gentleness of their manners, are powerful motives for many of the *Sauteux* families to settle among them, preferring those fruitful countries to their own, yet too tenacious to the customs of their own nation to conform to the manners of the others.

Their population may be reckoned to about six thousand souls, spread over this vast tract of country.

The climate.

Though the winter months are excessively cold, yet the air is very salubrious; the winter generally begins about the end of October, and the navigation opens about the middle of May. On Lake Superior and the other large lakes, thick fogs are very prevalent in the summer months, but never attended with any pernicious consequences to the Natives. The heat in summer, though great, is generally accompanied with refreshing breezes, especially near the borders of their lakes and rivers, and, were it not for the swarms of musquitoes and other troublesome insects which infest the low land and swamps, the summer months in this country would be as pleasant as in any part of the world. During a residence of 18 years in this country, I have never seen above three feet of snow, and many winters, not more than a foot.

The country abounds with rocky, barren mountains, especially near the large lakes, but in the valleys and flat ground, which are not of any considerable extent, the soil is rich, generally of a clayey or sandy bottom, with a thin strata of fine black loam, half a foot thick, on the surface. **Faoe a the country.**

The trees peculiar to those valleys are : maple, poplar, *plaine*, birch, oak and white fir : some parts of the low lands abound in swamps, which produce cedar and different species of willows which furnish the Natives with materials for their canoes ; the willow serves also as food for the moose deer, an animal which delights in those swamps. **Trees.**

The fruit found in this country are: the wild plum, a small sort of wild cherry, wild currants of different kinds, gooseberries, strawberries, raspberries, brambleberries, blackberries, choke-cherries, wild grapes, sand cherries, a delicious fruit which grows on a small shrub near sandy shores, and another blue-berry, a fine fruit not larger than a currant, tasting much like a pear and growing on a small tree about the size of a willow. In the swamps, you find two kinds of cranberries. Hazle-nuts, but of a very inferior quality, grow near the banks of the rivers and lakes. **Fruits.**

A kind of wild rice grows spontaneously and in abundance in most of their small muddy creeks and bays. This wholesome grain is of infinite use to the Natives, being an excellent food when boiled with a little fat, fish, sugar or any kind of meat, and, as it costs them nothing but gathering and husking, which is a very simple process, they never fail to lay by large quantities of it for the consumption of the year.

....(1) **Quadrupeds and birds.**

(1) To avoid repetitions, see : D. Cameron, " The Nipigon Country."

Though few countries can boast of a greater variety of the feathered tribes than the wilds of the North-West during the summer months, yet the return of spring is not, there, welcomed with the harmonious tones which make the delight of the groves of countries where the variety is not so great, but the superior beauty of their plumage, in a manner, makes up for this deficiency.

Insects, reptiles and fishes. Among the various swarms of insects which are found in this country, the musketoes, sand flies and another sort of black flies, are particularly troublesome to the Natives ; their swarms will often drive the deer from the wood to the borders of the lakes, where they find relief by the breeze and by plunging in the water. They have, moreover, the wasp, bee, ant and spiders of the venemous kind, but whose sting is scarcely felt ; the other various insects, such as butterflies, common flies, horse flies are innumerable.

Their reptiles are : the common garter snake, water snake, lizards, leeches, toads and frogs, all very inoffensive ; turtles of different species, from one pound weight to twenty pounds, which the Natives never eat, except in time of scarcity, although the meat is good.

The principal fishes are : sturgeon, cat-fish, whitefish, trout, pike, pickerel, carp, a kind of fresh water herring (1), tullibee, *Malachigan* (2) &c. ; the *picanon* is a large fish, about 15℔ weight, remarkable for its oily quality, and peculiar to Red Lake, about 100 miles west from *Lac La Pluie*. It was never known in any other part of the country, tho', I am told, it is common in the upper part of the Mississipi. This fish is only fit to eat, roasted,

(1) The gold eyed herring, so named on account of its large yellow eyes, and called by the French Canadians, *laquaiché.*

(2) Sheep's head.

but the head, when boiled, is considered a delicacy by the Indians.

There is probably no part of the globe which can boast of so many noble reservoirs of fresh water as this country. From Lake Superior to Lake Ouinipique, the two largest lakes, there is a chain of fifteen considerable ones, besides others of less note, and into which several noble rivers fall. The River of *Lac la Pluie* is one of the finest imaginable; it takes its rise from the lake of that name and, near its source, makes a beautiful fall of forty to fifty feet perpendicular and about 200 yards long. Except in two places, about its middle, it flows smoothly for one hundred miles, until it empties itself in *Lac du Bois.* Its course runs N. W. through a flat country, which could be cultivated to advantage; Indian corn, melons, cucumbers and all our garden vegetables thrive to perfection in its vicinity. It abounds with sturgeon and various kinds of fish, to which the Natives have recourse in time of scarcity. Lakes and Rivers.

The river Ouinipique is about 300 miles long from its rise, at *Lac du Bois*, to its mouth, in *Lac Ouinipique*; it is remarkable, both for the irregularity of its course and its rapidity, widening in some places in immense bays, interspersed with innumerable islands, and in other parts, contracting into small channels, where the rapidity of the waters is really picturesque, falling in tremendous cascades like a flight of stairs which in some places appear for a mile in length like a continual foaming sheet of water. It flows through a barren, mountainous and rocky country which scarcely yields any thing but cedar and pine.

Though, as I have said, no country can boast of larger reservoirs of fresh water than the *Sauteux* country, yet, innumerable shoals and rapids greatly impede the navigation in the interior country, and, except on large lakes, it would be almost impracti- Navigation

cable with boats or any wooden craft. Their birch canoes are, therefore, most ingeniously adapted for this purpose; being composed of light materials, they are easily carried over the portages, and have sufficient strength to resist the greatest swell and carry as heavy loads as any wooden craft of the same dimensions. They have them of different sizes, from those to carry 12 men, generally used by the tribes that live on Lake Superior, to others which only contain two or three men, and even only one, used by the tribes in the interior.

From that noble fall of *Ste Marie*, by the route which commonly leads in the North-West, to *Lac Ouinipique*, there are many beautiful rapids and falls which deserve notice. On the River *des tourtes*, to which the great carrying place of the Grand Portage leads from Lake Superior, there is a really picturesque succession of falls for upwards of nine miles; the last of them, called "The Partridge Fall," tumbles over a shelved rock of over 100 perpendicular feet, and though the body of water is not considerable, yet, in the spring, when the melting snows of the north swell o'er the banks of the river, the view is most beautiful and even sublimely romantic.

There is on the Kaministiquiya, near the North-West Company's new establishment, a tremendous fall, little inferior in height to the famous Fall of Niagara. This, likewise, falls from a smooth shelved rock in a perpendicular sheet for some hundred feet, until it foams in the contracted bed of the river below, forming a continual cloud of rain which moistens the surrounding plants for several acres, and, when the sun shines, a perfect rainbow is seen at a great distance below.

Besides these, many others of less magnitude are found on the communication to *Lac Ouinipique*. In this distance, which the *Voyageurs* compute to be 292 leagues from lake Superior, (1)

(1) This includes the windings of the rivers.

there are 60 portages over which they carry their canoes, forming in all about 20 miles.

To form an idea of the bold and singular navigation of those romantic waters, we must, in preference, follow the Canadian Voyageur, because the Natives, having very small canoes and being never encumbered with any considerable baggage, seldom require to land in the middle of the most dangerous rapids; they may, moreover, carry their small canoes through bushes and over rocks with comparative ease, where it would be impossible for the traders to clear a tract for the transportation of their large canoes and goods. The *Voyageurs.*

The North-West Company's canoes, manned with five men, carry about 3,000lb; they seldom draw more than eighteen inches of water and go, generally, at the rate of six miles an hour, in calm weather. When arrived at a portage, the bowman instantly jumps in the water, to prevent the canoe from touching the bottom, while the others tie their slings to the packages in the canoe and swing them on their backs to carry over the portage. The bowman and the steersman carry their canoe, a duty from which the middlemen are exempt. The whole is conducted with astonishing expedition, a necessary consequence of the enthusiasm which always attends their long and perilous voyages.

It is pleasing to see them, when the weather is calm and serene, paddling in their canoes, singing in chorus their simple melodious strains and keeping exact time with their paddles, which effectually beguiles their labours. When they arrive at a rapid, the guide or foreman's business is to explore the waters previous to their running down with their canoes, and, according to the height of the water, they either lighten the canoe by taking out part of the cargo and carry it over land, or run down the whole load.

It would be astonishing to an European observer to witness the dexterity with which they manage their canoes in those dangerous rapids, carrying them down like lightening on the surface of the water. The bowman, supported by the steersman, dexterously avoids the stones and shoals which might touch the canoe and dash it to pieces, to the almost certain destruction of all on board. It often baffles their skill, when the water is very high, to avoid plunging in foaming swells on the very brink of the most tremendous precipices, yet, those bold adventurers rather run this risk, for the sake of expedition, than lose a few hours by transporting the cargo over land.

When they are obliged to stem the current in strong rapids, they haul up the canoe with a line, all hands pulling along shore and sometimes wading through the water up to their middle, except one man, who remains in the stern of the canoe, in order to keep it in the proper channel; this part of their duty is always accompanied with much labour. When the wind favors, they always carry sail, and in a fresh gale, will generally go 8 or 9 miles on hour.

II

The Natives, their personal appearance and dress.—Their ideas of love and courtship — Marriages.— Polygamy.— Care and education of children.—Infants' dress.—Parental love.—Hospitality.—Their notions of politeness.—Their passions.

The Natives; their personal appearance.

The *Sauteux* are, in general, of the common stature, well proportioned, though inclining to a slender make, which would indicate more agility than strength. Their complexion is a whitish cast of the copper colour, their hair black, long, straight and of a very strong texture, the point of the nose rather flat, and a certain fulness in the lips, but not sufficient to spoil the appearance of the mouth. The teeth, of a beautiful ivory white, are regular, well set and seldom fail them, even in the most advanced period of life : their cheeks are high and rather prominent, their eyes black and lively, their countenance is generally pleasant, and the symmetry of their features is such as to constitute what can be called handsome faces.

The men are bold, manly and graceful in their gait, always carrying their bodies erect and easy ; the women on the contrary, by walking with the toes of their feet inclining inwards, have a disagreable, stiff and lame appearance, though in other respects they might claim some pretentions to beauty. They have a softness and delicacy in their countenance which rival the charms of some of our more civilized and accomplished *belles*.

Though no people take more pride in a fine head of hair, yet, such is their aversion to beards or hair on other parts of the

body, that they take particular care to pluck them out by the root as soon as they appear; they may sometimes, in consequence of a dream or religious vow, allow a thin lock to grow about the lips or chin.

They perforate their ears in their infancy and extend them to an unnatural size by suspending lead or any other heavy metal from the outer rim, which, in time, brings them down near the shoulder: this is reckoned very decent and becoming for the men, and particular care is, therefore, taken to have them suitably ornamented. Brass wire is in much repute for this purpose; the whole rim of the ear is encircled with this wire, which projects out from the side of the head like an arch and from which hang various ornaments of different forms; the most fashionable are made of silver, resembling a wheel and rather larger than a Spanish dollar. They wear silver bracelets, either on the naked arm or over the sleeve of the coat. The ornaments for the nose hang down about half an inch, and nearly touch the upper lip. They put great value on wampum beads and wear several strings of them about the neck, or suspended from the hair and ears.

They are not confined to any particular mode in wearing the hair; some allow it to fall negligently about the neck and shoulders, others crop it very close around the head and leave only a small tuft from the crown to the back part, which they tie up in a small club. The young men allow several long locks to fall down over the face, ornamented with ribands, silver broaches, &c.; they gather up another lock from behind the head into a small club wrapped up with very thin plates of silver, in which they fix the tail feathers of the eagle, or any other favorite bird. None but such who have distinguished themselves in war can presume to wear the tail feathers of the *Kiniew*; this

bird is of the eagle kind, very scarce and held in great esteem as a bird of war; its tail feathers not only distinguish the hero from the vulgar, but, likewise, represents the number of enemies slain in battle.

In common with the generality of uncivilized nations, they are passionately fond of painting their faces and bodies; the ingredients for this purpose are vermilion, white and blue clay, charcoal or soot, mixed with a little grease or water. With the clay, they daub the body, legs and thighs in rude bars and patches, without the least regard to neatness, whereas the greatest degree of fancy and taste is reserved for painting the face, in which the red and black is sure to predominate.

They esteem painting such an essential ornament in dress that, without it, they reckon themselves *en deshabillé*, should their dress be ever so complete and elegant in other respects; old men, however, can dispense with the formalities of dress, unless on very particular occasions. They have also the habit of puncturing their skin, on different parts of the body, in various figures representing the sun, stars, eagles, serpents, &c., in the choice of which they are generally led by the virtue of some extraordinary dream.

Their dress.

The dress of the men consists of a molton capot, or coat, in the Canadian fashion, which comes down to the knees; a gun screw or a small peg of wood is sufficient to fasten it about the breast and serves in place of buttons; they tighten it around the body with a worsted belt, in which the *cassetête* and knife are occasionally worn. For breech clout, they pass a narrow slip of bleu cloth between the thighs and fix it on by means of a string, curiously ornamented with the joint bone of a swan's wing, which they tie around the naked waist; the ends of the breech clout fall down behind and before for modesty sake.

The leggins are made of moltons, strouds, or scarlet cloth, without any particular regard to the shape of the leg, but a narrow wing, or border, projects the whole length of the outside of the leggin and curves about the ankle into the shoe. This border is garnished with gartering riband and beads, and is fixed by means of tape to the breech clout string above the *hanches* and secured below the knee with garters.

Over the whole, they wear a white blanket, with which they wrap the body from the shoulders down to the ankles.

Their shoes are made of the dressed skin of the moose or reindeer; those used for travelling are made large, to admit thick socks, and without any regard to neatness, but on other occasions they have them made exactly to the foot, elegantly embroidered with porcupine quills of various colours.

In winter, they wear a cloth cape, resembling a turban, but in other seasons, they generally go bareheaded, except a few " bucks ", who wear a piece of the skin of an otter, or of some other favorite animal, wrapped around the head, merely as an ornament, or out of some religious whim.

Their intercourse with us has given them such an idea of the value of silver, that nothing in their estimation is so valuable and so becoming to set off their persons as trinkets made of that metal.

Women's dress.

The women wear petticoats of blue cloth, which come down to the ankle, and cover their bodies upwards to the pit of the shoulder with the same stuff. Their sleeves, made of red or blue molton, come down near the wrist and open along the inside of the arm ; they tie them by the uppermost corner behind the shoulders, so that the lower corners, which fall down behind, cover a considerable part of the back. A narrow slip of cloth is fixed across the breast, from the end of which two other slips

are suspended, carefully ornamented with white beads and various other trinkets.

They wear silver bracelets on their wrists, rings on their fingers, beads about the neck and a profusion of silver crosses and others ornaments dangling down upon the breast. Their ear and nose ornaments are the same as the men's, though not in the same profusion ; their ears are not distorted to such an unnatural size, nor encumbered with silver wheels and brass wire. Their blankets are a size smaller than the men's, but worn in the same manner and tightened with garters below the knee.

In painting, they use no other ingredients but vermilion and charcoal, the red is confined to a small spot on each cheek, the roots of the hair and, sometimes, around the eyes. They are very careful of their hair, anointing it with bear's oil, which gives it a smooth and glossy appearance, and makes it grow very fast. They divide it with a comb from the forehead to the crown in a straight line, and gather it behind the head into a cylindrical club, about six inches long, wrapped up with any dirty rag, over which it is tied very tight with a piece of tape, quite close to the head, which arrangement gives it a very stiff and arkward appearance.

They are not insensible to the charms of love, though, indeed, not so subject to its empire as the Europeans are in general. Here, the disappointed lover can bear the indifference of his mistress with the calmest fortitude. In their courtship, they are perfect strangers to that refinement of flattery which so often prevails in our amours, and nothing, in their opinion, can be more derogatory to the character of a man than an abject adulation towards the fair sex. **Their ideas of love and courtship.**

Their manner of making love is not only singular, but rude and indecent, according to our ideas of good breeding. The

lover begins his first addresses by gently pelting his mistress with bits of clay, snow balls, small sticks, or any thing he may happen to have in his hand: if she returns the compliment, he is encouraged to continue the farce and repeat it for a considerable time. After these preliminaries, some significant smiles and witticisms are exchanged, but of such a nature as would make our more delicate fair ones blush. Matters being this far advanced, the happy lover is persuaded that his addresses are agreable, and that nothing more is wanted but the consent of the parents, which, to a good hunter or warrior, is seldom denied. He then makes them a considerable present, which, if accepted, becomes his permission to sleep with his mistress and keep her as his wife.

The marriage is so far consummated without further ceremony, but, to make it binding, it is necessary that he should live at least one winter with his father-in-law, during which the old man claims an undisputed right to all the produce of his hunt; but so soon as the young couple have a child of their own, they are released from any further dependence on the old people, and are at liberty to go and live where they please.

Polygamy. Though the generality are content with one wife, yet, polygamy is encouraged among them, and a good hunter has commonly two or three. *Kakegameg*, the late chief of *Lac Lapluie*, had not less than five wives. Notwithstanding the incessant toil and care which necessarily attend the maintenance of a large family, especially in such barren and miserable country as these people inhabit, they have the most powerful reasons to keep as many wives as they can possibly support. Their consequence and respectability in society are generally esteemed according to the nature of their alliances and the number of their children. The first wife, however, claims a certain superiority over the others, and

is generally considered by the husband as chief mistress of the family.

Though they seem to live in perfect harmony together in the presence of their husband, it may, however, be very reasonably supposed that they have their jealousies and family broils ; such misunderstandings can scarcely be avoided when the husband has a favorite among his wives. He never interferes in women's quarrels, unless he is personally attacked by any of them ; in that case, he knows of a decisive argument to settle the dispute, which is nothing more nor less than a sound beating to the unfortunate delinquent, with a stick, an axe, or any other thing which he may happen to have in his hand.

It is customary with them to marry young, their roving way of life would, indeed, seem to make it a necessity. A *Sauteux* cannot, with any degree of comfort, support the fatigues of the chase without a female companion to make and mend his shoes, scrape the skins, carry home the meat, pitch the tent and cook the victuals, with many other domestic concerns which necessarily fall to their lot with all the drudgery and most laborious part of the work, while his province is principally confined to hunting and fishing ; yet, those women, for all their work and devotion, are regarded by the men little better than slaves to their will, or mere beasts of burden for their conveniency. **Marriage.**

They are not, however, without their Xanthippes, who, equal to the most celebrated heroines of the ancients and moderns, can assert the rights of their sex, with a vengeance.

When the parties cannot agree, the marriage is dissolved by mutual consent, and each is at liberty to form new connexions with whom they please and when they please, without consulting any one, the public never concern themselves with matters of this nature.

Women in childbed

When a woman is in labour, a small temporary shade is erected for her use, and every thing necessary for her accommodation is carefully placed within her reach. They have no professional midwives, but every matron who had children of her own is supposed to be equal to the task, and is always provided with proper medecines for the circumstance. Nature has providently endowed these poor women with such robust and healthy constitutions as to render the aid of the midwife, in most cases, unnecessary. I have known instances of some of them, labouring hard and carrying burdens on their backs all day, safely delivered next morning without the aid of any one, and yet enjoying sufficient strength and vigour to unable them to pursue their ordinary occupations.

Parental affection

There are not, perhaps, greater demonstrations of joy at the birth of the first heir in England than is testified in the humble dwelling of a *Sauteux* when a male child is born. Not only the parents and relations, but also the whole village, seem equally interested, especially the women, who immediately crowd to see the young stranger. One of these officious gossips first announces the sex and quality of the child to the father, and then invites him to come and see it. He is probably the only person present who seems apparently indifferent, but amply testifies his joy by his liberal presents to the midwife, or person who procured the necessary medecines.

The infant's dress.

The infant is immediately swaddled in a small blanket, or in any other warm stuff which may happen to be at hand, but never washed in water, as is customary with us. A piece of cloth is previously made in a proper form to receive a small pillow, on which the child is laid and dressed, having first a little dry moss, or rotton wood finely pounded, carefully applied between the thighs and feet, which keeps the child remarkably easy and clean.

It is dressed in this manner until it attains the age of a month or so, when a very convenient sort of portable cradle is prepared, in which it is dressed in the day time and carried about from place to place on their backs. The cradle.

This piece of furniture consists of a smooth thin board, about 2½ feet by 18 inches, on which a narrow piece of thin wood is fixed edgeways and bended in the form of an elliptical arch, forming a cavity sufficient to contain a blanket and a pillow on which the child is laid and dressed. Another piece of thin wood projects from the upper end of the board, directly over the infant's head, this is bent in the form of the broad end of a heart, and fixed to the cradle by means of a small bar across the back part of the board. Besides being useful for handling the cradle about, it, likewise, serves to support a handkerchief, or any other light stuff, which they fix upon it, occasionally, as a curtain to screen the child from the air and flies.

The infant is perfectly secured in this cradle by means of two long bandages of cloth fixed to the sides, and garnished with a considerable degree of taste. Two others slips of curious workmanship fall from this projected arch at top, which gives the whole a very neat and elegant appearance. Secured in this manner, the women carry them on their backs, whether on a journey or when engaged in their ordinary out door work, without the least inconvenience to themselves or to their tender charge.

They seldom wean their young ones before the age of three or four years, unless they happen to have another in the interval; this no doubt proceeds from their uncommon tenderness and affection towards their children. I have always observed that any particular kindness conferred on these young favorites never fails to ensure the affection of the parents, and, on the con- Parental love.

trary, should any one abuse their children, it would most certainly lead to a sullen hatred which would never be forgotten.

Education of boys.

As soon as boys begin to run about, they are provided with bows and arrows, and acquire, as it were " by instinct," an astonishing dexterity in shooting birds, squirrels, butterflies, &c. Hunting in miniature may be justly said to comprise the whole of their education and childish diversion. Such as excel in this kind of exercise are sure of being particularly distinguished by their parents and seldom punished for any misbehaviour, but, on the contrary, indulged in every degree of excess and caprice. I have often seen grown up boys of this description, when punished for some serious fault, strike their father and spit in his face, calling him " *bad dog* " or " *old woman*," and, sometimes, carrying their insolence so far as to threaten to stab or shoot him, and, what is rather singular, these too indulgent parents seem to encourage such unnatural liberties, and even glory in such conduct from their favorite children. I heard them boast of having sons who promised at an early age to inherit such bold and independant sentiments.

The feast of "naming the child."

When a name his to be given a child, a respectable person is invited to officiate as priest; the whole ceremony consists in a speech, a few songs, and a feast, to which all the friends are invited (1). It is remarkable that if the infant is uncommonly cross and fretful after the ceremony, they seriously imagine that it is displeased with the name and, of course, find it necessary to give it another.

They have many other superstitious notions, equally absurd, respecting children; for instance, they say that when an infant smiles and looks steadfastly at its fist, it indicates death, or some

(1) For the details of the ceremony, see : D. Cameron " The Nipigon country."

serious accident to it, and, when apparently in good health, if it is restless at night and not inclined to sleep as usual, they expect to see strangers soon or hear of some very important news.

Children of nine or ten years of age not only enjoy the confidence of the men, but are generally considered as companions and very deliberately join in their conversations.

No people assume more merit or consequence from the virtues or warlike exploits of their ancestors. Though they acknowledge the superiority of our arts and manufactures, and their own incapacity to imitate us, yet, as a people, they think us far inferior to themselves. They pity our want of skill in hunting and our incapacity of travelling through their immense forests without guides or food. Indian pride.

Having but a very imperfect idea of all the necessaries required in civilized life, they impute our commercial intercourse with them to our sordid avarice, or the miserable poverty of our own country. Like some of the Natives of the Pacific Ocean, they really imagine that we frequent their country merely to fill our bellies. The highest compliments which they bestow on a white man is that he is in every respect like one of themselves, but no one can aspire to that honor who has not a tolerable knowledge of their language and customs.

They regard our books and writings with some degree of veneration, and allow their possessors to have some merit and, sometimes, condescend to honor them with the appellation of " Chief " or " Father ".

These haughty people, though uncommonly reserved among themselves, are, with their traders, the meanest beggars and most abject flatterers on earth, and, though naturally honest in their dealing with one another, they often find many occasion to cheat their traders with impunity. Grave and serious, even in

their amusements, they speak little, but always to the purpose, observing the greatest circumspection in their most trivial concerns.

Their hospitality.

Hospitality with them is not merely confined to strangers, but equally conferred on every person who may require their assistance. When several families live together, provisions are often distributed in common, except such portion as are reserved for the traders or for some other particular purpose. It matters not who has killed the game ; provided there is meat in the camp, all who choose to fetch a load for their families are welcome, and it very often happens that the hunter finds himself with the smallest share, yet, he enjoys no small degree of pride for having it in his power to satisfy so many friends. As they are naturally generous and liberal in their dispositions, they regard avaricious characters, liars, thieves and slanderers with the greatest contempt.

Abuse of liquor

See : D. Cameron, " The Nipigon country ".

Their game laws

It is customary with them, in the beginning of winter, to separate in single families, a precaution which seems necessary to their very existence, and of which they are so sensible that when one of them has chosen a particular district for his hunting ground, no other person will encroach upon it without a special invitation, and whoever discovers a beaver lodge and marks its situation may consider it his undoubted property, and no other person will attempt to destroy it without his permission. In case of famine, however, any one may abandon his district and seek a better hunt on his neighbour's land without incurring the least ill will or reproach : they say : " the lands were made for " the use of man, therefore, every one has an equal right to par- " take of the produce."

In their migrations, they go by short stages, and are never very particular in the choice of grounds for their encampments,

provided they have plenty of wood and water, they find themselves equally well, whether in the thickest wood or in the plains.

When the men are not employed in the indispensable duties of hunting and fishing, their time is generally taken up with smoking, singing and beating of the drum, or in making pipe stems, wooden bowls, snowshoe frames, drums, rattles and the like. Though no people have a greater aversion to hard labour, they by no means encourage idleness, especially with the women; these poor drudges, though burdened with the care and nursing of the children, are never exempt from the hardest work, while their husbands very deliberately smoke their pipes and look on with the greatest indifference. Their occupation

Their wants are very few, they can the more easily part with their superfluities and put less value on property; this they have in common with most savage nations, whose general notions about property vary according to their local circumstances and degree of civilization.

The women have the very singular habit, when in the action of freeing their bodies from lice, of taking the vermin very deliberately with their fingers and conveying them between the teeth, when, after being carefully squashed, they are either swallowed or thrown out with the saliva. This disgusting custom proceeds from a ridiculous notion that, should the vermin be destroyed in any other manner, they would likely find their way back again and feed in their former places. This custom is, moreover, so far from being considered unbecoming, that in some of their public meetings, the women perform this necessary office to their husbands and children with the greatest imaginable indifference.

Such is their notions of politeness that they seldom give a square refusal to any favor that is required from them; Their notions of politeness.

should they not be inclined to oblige, they know perfectly well how to give a plausible reason for their refusal.

To call one of them directly by his name is considered very impertinent, except among intimates and relations ; if you ask a bystander his name, he may probably not be affronted, but you need not expect a direct answer,and recourse must be had to some other person present, who makes no difficulty to satisfy you. But if the person whose name you require happens to be within hearing, your informer satisfies your curiosity in a low whisper.

Their manner of salutation is most ridiculous : when strangers or long absent friends meet, they remain like statues for a considerable time, with their faces hid or inclined to one side and without exchanging one word. After a long pause, they smile or grin at each other, this is understood to be the prelude to asking news, and the conversation becomes general after they have smoken a pipe.

I never could meet any of them who could exactly tell his own age ; this, indeed, is a very singular circumstance in a people whose intellectual faculties are by no means contemptible.

Their passions.

Their passions, whether of a benevolent or mischievous tendency, are always more violent than ours. I believe this has been found to be the case with all barbarous nations, who never cultivate the mind ; hence proceed the cruelties imputed to savages, in general, towards their enemies. Though these people cannot be acquitted from some degree of that ferocious barbarity which characterizes the savages, they are, however, free from that deliberate cruelty which has been so often imputed to other barbarous nations. They are content to kill and scalp their enemy, and never reserve a prisoner for the refined torments of a lingering and cruel death.



III

Habitations and food.—Weapons.—Music and musical instruments.—Poetry. *Kakegameg* and *Asiniboiness*.—Dances ; the "war dance" ; the "grand calumet dance."—The "hurdle."—Games peculiar to women.—The games of "bones" and of "sticks."

Their tents are constructed with slender long poles, erected in the form of a cone and covered with the rind of the birch tree. The general diameter of the base is about fifteen feet, the fire place exactly in the middle, and the remainder of the area, with the exception of a small place for the hearth, is carefully covered with the branches of the pine or cedar tree, over which some bear skins and old blankets are spread, for sitting and sleeping. A small aperture is left in which a bear skin is hung in lieu of a door, and a space is left opened at the top, which answers the purpose of window and chimney. In stormy weather, the smoke would be intolerable, but this inconvenience is easily removed by contracting or shifting the aperture at top according to the point from which the wind blows. It is impossible to walk, or even to stand upright, in their miserable habitations, except directly around the fire place. The men sit generally with their legs stretched before them, but the women have theirs folded backwards, inclined a little to the left side, and can confortably remain the whole day in those attitudes, when the weather is too bad for remaining out of doors. In fine weather, they are very fond of basking in the sun. Their habitations.

When the family is very large, or when several families live together, the dimensions of their tents are, of course, in proportion and of different forms. Some of those spacious habitations resemble the roof of a barn, with small openings at each end for doors, and the whole length of the ridge is left uncovered at top for the smoke and light. The master and mistress take possession of the bottom of the tent, right opposite the door, furniture and provisions are piled up without order near the mistress's place.

Their food. In the spring, when the hunting season is over, they generally assemble in small villages, either at the trader's establishment, or in places where fish or wild fowl abound; sturgeon and white fish are most common, though they have abundance of pike, trout, suckers, and pickerel. They sometimes have the precaution to preserve some for the summer consumption, this is done by opening and cleaning the fish and then carefully drying it in the smoke or sun, after which it is tied up very tight in large parcels, wrapped up in bark and kept for use; their meat, in summer, is cured in the same manner.

This is found a very necessary precaution in case of famine, which they too often experience, especially in those parts of the country where moose deer are scarce, as the meat of this animal and that of the reindeer and bear constitute the greater part of their food When they have it in great plenty, the most of their time is taken up in continual feastings, to which the whole village assists, and of which the dogs and children devour no inconsiderable part. By this conduct, large quantities are wasted in a few days, which, by a little economy, might be sufficient to maintain their families for the greatest part of the winter, but their notions of economy are generally confined to the present moment, and they have seldom any care to provide for the future.

In times of scarcity, the inmost fibres of the bark of the pine tree and a kind of weed which grows on rocks serve them as food, and, strange to say, even the dung of the reindeer is esteemed as a delicate dish by some of them. I have tasted it, out of curiosity, but thought it not deserving the encomium which they bestow upon it. In the state they eat it, it is of a dull green colour, of a peculiar sweatish taste, but of a nutritive quality, when mixed with other food. **Reindeer dung as food.**

Their meat is either boiled in a kettle, or roasted by means of a sharp stick, fixed in the ground at a convenient distance from the fire, and on which the meat is fixed and turned occasionally towards the fire, until the whole is thoroughly done; their fish is dressed in the same manner.

Their favorite drink, in the winter time, is hot broth poured over a dishful of pure snow. It has the peculiar advantage, by reason of the gradual dissolution of the snow, of being drank at any degree of heat or cold which is most agreable. I have always found it wholesome and pleasant drink.

They observe no regular times in their meals, but, like wild animals eat with the most voracious appetite at all hours of the day and night; they can, however, abstain from food for many days together with a degree of indifference and good humour incredible to an European.

They never sit down to a social meal, except at public feasts; the men, women and children eat their share, and each individual is helped with his portion in a separate dish; the master of the house is first served, unless there happens to be a stranger present, a character they always respect, and for whom the first place and the choice bits are always reserved, the mistress keeps a reserve in the kettle for herself and rest of family.

See : D. Cameron, " The Nipigon Country. "

Women's credulity.

Their culinary utensils consist of a few kettles, wooden bowls and spoons made of maple or birch, dishes made of birch rind and ornamented about the edge with painted quills. They have bags and pouches of various sorts, some made of worsted, in which their medecines and most valuable effects are kept, others made of the skins of otters, beavers, fishers, or other favorite animals ; some of those are elegantly garnished, and consecrated to religious or conjuring matters, others, of less importance, contain their tobacco and pipes, &c.

Weapons, &c.

Besides the *casse-tête*, knife and gun, they wear a kind of a short broad dagger. In war, they use the *pocomagan*, a very destructive weapon ; it consists of a piece of wood, a foot and a half long, curved at one end, with a big heavy knob, in which is fixed a piece of long sharp iron ; they have lances, six or seven feet long, but seldom or never make use of them.

Their fishing taklings are : nets, lines, *seines* and iron spears fixed into a very straight and smooth pole of 12 or 15 feet long. The ice chisel or trench serves to pierce the ice in winter for setting lines or nets, or for working the beaver. The remainder of their moveables consists in axes, cradles, snow-shoes, sledges and bark canoes, which form the catalogue of the furniture and effects considered as quite sufficient for the most wealthy families among them.

Musical instruments.

No respectable person or head of a family among them would go without his drum This favorite instrument consists of a piece of hollow tree, having a wooden bottom and the top covered with a piece of thin parchment, on which they perform with a stick having the form of a hammer. They have another sort, of a smaller size and not unlike our military drums, which are generally reserved for important circumstances. Those are

curiously ornamented with various hieroglyphical figures and the down feathers of the swan.

They have rattles made of gourds, or of any piece of hollow wood, in which a few grains of shot or small pebbles are enclosed; this instrument is held in the hand by means of a short handle, and shaked with great dexterity to keep time with their songs and drums at their grand concert. They use another kind of rattle, made of a number of small bones, or the hindmost hoofs of the deer, loosely fixed to the end of a small stick; both sorts of rattles have about the same effect.

Their only musical instruments being the drum and rattle, (unless we include a very simple whistle which they use in war,) it cannot, therefore, be reasonably expected that any thing like our ideas of harmony can be produced with such rude and imperfect instruments. To a perfect stranger, all their music would seem a perfect monotony, but a person a little accustomed to their concerts would soon perceive many varieties of the sublime and solemn kind.

They seem quite indifferent to our gay and complicated airs, and, though they are fond of seeing a person perform on the violin or german flute, they take more pleasure in observing the elasticity of the hands and fingers of the performer than in the harmony which is produces, but when the tunes are of a serious or melancholy nature, they seem to listen with the greatest attention, and, in conformity to their own ideas of music, they attribute such airs to some warlike or religious subject.

Their drums and rattles are always accompanied with songs, and at some of their grand concerts the women join chorus; their soft shrill voices make a pleasant contrast with the sound of the drum, even the delicate ear of an European would be pleased with such melody.

Poetry.

There is neither rhyme nor measure observed in their poetry; no originality of thought or choice of expression is required, but the mere subject and air constitute the merit of the song, the general topics of which are religious subjects, short narratives of the exploits of their warriors, or praise of the dead. Their "conjurors" or "dreamers," who by their prophesies are supposed to contribute to some warlike exploit, become, likewise, the subject of their songs.

Kakegameg and Asiniboiness.

A recent instance of this happened a few years ago at *Lac La-pluie. Kakegameg*, the late chief, having formed a war party against the *Scieux*, proceeded with his army near the confines of the enemy's country, but, falling short of provisions, and his army being greatly broken down by fatigue, the greatest part mutinied and insisted on returning to their families, while he, with a few faithful adherents, were determined to continue their route and not return in a shameful manner without attempting to procure a scalp, or, at least, discovering some vestige of the enemy.

While they were in this consultation, *Asiniboiness*, a man who pretended to a considerable degree of skill in dreams and divination, and was at the same time the principal leader of the mutinied party, got up and begged their attention for a moment, then, addressing himself to the chief, began in this manner.

" You do well to prosecute the war with the few brave men who " have still vigour enough to attend you; before the sun sets " three times you will find the enemy and procure a scalp; but " to ensure this success, it is likewise necessary that I and my " party should return home, otherwise, many of the young men " who are already worn out with fatigue might become easy " victims to our enemies. Such is the substance of a dream " which I had last night, in which the *Manitou* appeared and " strongly impressed these particulars on my mind.

After this speech, both parties seemed satisfied, and matters were regarded in a more propitious light. The chief and his few companions proceeded with confidence and, next day, killed and scalped a *Scieu* whom they discovered robbing a rook's nest on the top of a tree. Highly satisfied with this success, they thought it prudent to return home, and though the cowardly *Asiniboiness* had so shamefully deserted the common cause, yet, by virtue of his pretended prophesies, he acquired equal honor with the chief in the success of the enterprise, and a song was composed on the subject which is still in vogue amongst them, consisting of these words: " Kakegameg and Asiniboiness have " shot and scalped the yellow Scieux ".

All their songs are equally simple, seldom exceeding a dozen of words, but the air and manner of singing them is attended with a certain degree of mystery represented in hieroglyphical figures on bits of bark, and never learned or explained to the vulgar without very considerable presents in return.

Their dances may be divided into three different classes : the common dance, in which both sexes join, the " war dance " and " *grand calumet* dance ". The first is performed in the following manner : the body is kept a little inclined forward, the feet close together, with the knees bent, the arms and hands quite close to the sides, and the elbows projecting backward. In this posture, they hop in all directions, sometimes on both feet at once, and at other times raising each foot alternately. One or two begin the dance, others soon join, and a motley group of men and women are formed, without any regard to numbers, having neither variety in their steps or figures that deserve the attention of curious spectator. The graceful movements of the body are of little moment, and the chief merit is keeping time to the music by stamping furiously on the ground and swinging their shoulders and their hands close to their bodies. **Dances.**

The "war dance."

The "war dance" is a representation of the different manœuvres of discovering, attacking and scalping an enemy. The performer begins with a hanger, *cassetête*, or some other offensive weapon, which he flourhishes in a variety of threatening attitudes, while dancing; he then hops along for some time, apparently with the greatest caution, and squats down suddenly on his hams behind his weapon. After having feigned the different motions of loading a gun, he levels his piece at his supposed enemy, runs forward and, supposing his victim yet alive, pretends to fall upon him, stricking several blows of the *cassetête* on his head and finally despatches him by a mortal stab near the heart with his dagger. He then instantly pretends to make a circular incision with his knife around the head to raise the scalp, which he attempts to take with his teeth, after which he gives the whoop and dances around the circle. The whole merit of this performance depends on the dexterity and rapidity of the different movements, though, at the same time, some attention must be given to the measure and cadence of the music.

The *Grand Calumet* dance.

The *Grand Calumet* dance is only performed on some extraordinary occasion; in fact, all the northern tribes, especially the *Maskegons* and those about *Lac Lapluie* and River Ouinipic seem to have entirely neglected it, but the *Pilleurs* and their southerly neighbours take great merit in th ir superior knowledge of this dance.

The dancer is provided with a rattle in his right hand and a war pipe stem in his left. This stem is curiously ornamented with feathers of different colours, small locks of hair and bits of riband suspended from it at equal distance near the extremity. The tail feathers of the *kiniew* are fixed in such manner as to form a beautiful section of a circle, which falls down, and whose radius forms an acute angle to the end of the stem.

He holds the stem in a horizontal position, keeping exact time with the song and drum, shaking his rattle in every direction, and working himself up by degrees into many strange and uncommon posture, stamping furiously along, with his body sometimes parallel to the ground, twisting himself and turning in an astonishing manner, and, yet, always keeping time with the music. At intervals, he brandishes his stem or rattle towards some spectators in such quick and masterly a manner as would make a mere stranger imagine that he actually wished to devour or swallow him up. The performer finishes by presenting his implements to another person, which is always considered a compliment, and in this manner the dance continues so long as there are parties willing to join.

When assembled in the summer season at the Company's forts, or at any other general rendez-vous, it is customary with them, if not occupied with their more serious concerns, to amuse themselves at different games. **The "hurdle"** *La crosse.*

The " hurdle " is their favorite game ; not only their young men, but men advanced in life sometimes engage in it. On this occasion they strip naked, save their breech clouts, head dress, a few silver ornaments on their arms and a belt around their waist ; their faces and bodies are painted in the highest style. Each man is provided with a hurdle, an instrument made of a small stick of wood about three feet long, bended at the end to a small circle, in which a loose piece of net work is fixed, forming a cavity big enough to receive a leather ball, about the size of a man's fist.

Every thing being prepared, a level plain about half a mile long is chosen, with proper barriers or goals at each end. Having previously formed into two equal parties, they assemble in the very middle of the field, and the game begins by throwing up the ball perpendicularly in the air, when, instantly, both **Rules of the game.**

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parties form a singular group of naked men, painted in different colors and in the most comical attitudes imaginable, gaping with their hurdles elevated in the air to catch the ball. Such a scene would make a scene worthy of the pencil of a Hogarth or a Poussin.

Whoever is so fortunate as to catch the ball in his hurdle, runs with it towards the barrier with all his might, supported by his party, while his opponents pursue him and endeavour to strike it out.

He who succeeds in doing so, runs in the same manner towards the opposite barrier and is, of course, pursued in his turn. If in danger of being overtaken, he may throw it with his hurdle towards any of his associates who may happen to be nearer the barrier than himself. They have a particular knack of throwing it to a great distance in this manner, so that the best runners have not always the advantage, and, by a peculiar way of working their hands and arms while running, the ball never drops out of their hurdle.

The best of three heats wins the game, and, besides the honor acquired on such occasions, a considerable prize is adjudged to the victors. The vanquished, however, generally challenge their adversaries to renew the game the next day, which is seldom refused. The game then becomes more important, as the honor of the whole village is at stake, and it is carried on with redoubled impetuosity, every object which might impede them in their career is knocked down and trod under foot without mercy, and, before the game is decided, it is a common thing to see numbers sprawling on the ground with wounded legs and broken heads, yet this never creates any disputes or illwill after the play is decided.

Women's "hurdle."

The women have a game in imitation of the hurdle, in which the men never join. On this occasion, these heroines are pro-

vided with straight poles, about six feet long and pointed at one end, with which they throw two balls joined together by a short link or cord, about four inches long.

The game is begun and continued in the same manner as the hurdle, with the same impetuosity, but, seldom, with the same order and good humour, for it is common for these ladies, before the game is decided, to quarrel and fight with their cudgels in good earnest, and to the no small diversion of the men, who are often spectators of the farce, and take particular pleasure in seeing the women thus embroiled in their play.

The game of "bones."

They have another game peculiar to women and children and performed in the following manner. Seven or eight small hollow bones of a conical shape are strung on a small cord, six inches long, at the end of which is fixed a piece of leather in imitation of a bird's tail, full of holes and principally meant to keep the bones from slipping off; to the other extremity of the cord is fixed a small sharp pointed pin of wood or bone, by which the instrument is held in the hand.

The whole art consists in swinging the machine gently with the hand and in such a direction that, in reverting back, one or more of the bones may remain on the point of the pin, the bones being placed so as to fall into one another, as so many funnels, while the intrument is perpendicular. Every bone which happens to remain in this manner on the pin after the swing, counts one towards the game. The tail is difficult to catch, but when caught it is a capital point and generally decides the game in favor of the fortunate holder, as he may count one for every hole in the tail. While a person counts, he keeps possession of the instrument, otherwise, he gives it to the next person, who swings it in his turn as often as he counts a point towards the game.

The game of "sticks"

The most simple of all their games is performed with a handfull of very small straight sticks, which must always be an odd number; these are divided into two portions, at the discretion of the holder, he takes one in each hand and presents them cross ways to his opponent, who chooses one of the portions, each then counts his share, and he who has the pairs counts one point towards the game and deals out the sticks to the other as long as he counts.

Another game of which they are passionately fond, and in which women may occasionally join, is performed in the following manner: A large wooden dish is provided, in which they put a certain number of thin circular bones or pieces of metal about the size of a common button, having one side stained black and the other side of a bright colour; any number of people may play, by sitting in a circular manner around the dish. The game begins by a person taking hold of the dish in a horizontal position and striking it gently on a blanket previously laid on the floor for the purpose, then, by making the bones or pieces of metal bounce into the air, they fall and settle in the dish, and all which fall their black faces uppermost count towards the game. While the holder counts, he may keep possession of the dish, otherwise, he forfeits his chance and must give it to the next person; in this manner it goes around the circle. The holder at each stroke he gives must repeat a short unintelligible *jargon*, by which he thinks to ensure good luck.

In this manner they cheerfully amuse themselves and, though their games are always interesting, they never encourage them so far as to interfere with their more serious concerns. They can bear the caprice of fortune with an admirable degree of patience and good humour, and are perfect strangers to that sullen black melancholy which, too often, characterizes the generality of our professed gamesters.

IV

Hunting : details about the moose, beaver, bear hunts.—Sturgeon fishing.—War with the Sioux, their traditional enemies.—Origin of the war.—Migration of the Indian races to the West.—Mode of warfare.—Government.—Language.—Kalendar.

Moose hunting.

The *orignal*, or moose deer, are seldom found in large droves like the elk or buffaloe, but are generally scattered in small bands, which frequent the thickest wood, and feed upon the tender branches of the willow, birch or poplar. While undisturbed by the hunters, they remain within the narrow circle of a few acres, for a whole season. The size of the animal, its skin and meat, which is of the most excellent quality, make the hunting of it an object of the first consequence with the Natives ; it may, indeed, be reckoned their staff of life, and a scarcity of moose in the winter season is sure to cause a very severe famine. It is, therefore, found necessary to become initiated from a very early age to all the precautions and art which that hunt requires.

For this sport, a windy day is chosen, and if the hunter has the good fortune to fall on a fresh track, he is seldom mistaken about the distance at which the animal may be found. As he proceeds, he must carefully keep the wind in his face, because the moose has a most exquisite scent and can smell its pursuers, to windward, at a great distance, in which case it is immediately alarmed and runs so fast for many miles without stopping as to render pursuit entirely fruitless. The hunter, therefore, never follows the track in a direct line when he supposes the animal

near, unless he has the wind directly in his favor, but makes a large circuit until he has reason to suppose the animal to windward ; he then advances slowly, taking particular care to tread softly as he proceeds along. The least rotten branch he might break by accident is sufficient to give alarm at the distance of a half a mile, though it is quite indifferent to the cracking of the wood in a storm.

When a fresh track or fresh dung indicates that the animal is near, the hunter often stops short to endeavour to see it; sometimes the ear, a leg or only a small part of the body can be seen through the thick foliage, but this is enough for an expert hunter to make sure of his game, and to know exactly where he is to aim. If the animal is killed, the entrails are immediately taken out, lest the meat should putrify, and a pole is stuck in the ground, with the cover of the hunter's gun or his belt suspended from it, in order to scare away the wolves, crows, or any other animal which might destroy the meat. He takes the tongue and heart home to his tent, and orders the women and children to go next day to fetch the meat.

Beaver hunting.

After the moose, the beaver becomes the most favorite object of their chase. They have various methods of taking this animal. In the fall of the year, they take them with traps placed on some beaten track, which these animals frequent while building their habitations, or collecting their winter store. Steel traps are generally set under water, in such places where the animal is accustomed to debark. The most simple method, however, is by destroying these houses, and draining the pond on which they are situated, so that the animals, being alarmed and deprived of the water so necessary to their existence, take immediately to flight and become an easy prey to the hunters, who cautiously watch every avenue through which they might escape. But should the beavers get into any of those numerous

holes or washes which they dig around their habitations, they can often baffle the united efforts, both of dogs and hunters. It is, therefore, necessary, while draining the pond, to find out and stop as many of those holes as possible, so that the beavers, finding no admittance in their stronghold, must roam at large, subject every moment to be discovered by the enemy. Dogs are particularly useful in finding the washes, especially in low, swampy ground, where the most experienced hunter very often cannot succeed.

When the water is clear and undisturbed at the entrance of a wash, it is supposed that the beaver is out, and it is immediately shut up, but if the water appears muddy, or bears marks of having been recently agitated, the hunter concludes that there is a beaver within, and instantly gets to work to force it out, by breaking the ground above the wash, which he finds out by the hollow sound of the ground. In this, great labour and perseverance are required, as they have often to work hard in this manner for several days without killing a single beaver, while, at other times, in a few hours, they kill them in great numbers. The beginning of winter, while the ice is yet thin, is the best time for this kind of hunt, as the entrance of the washes are not yet frozen, and are easily found.

In the spring of the year, when the navigation is free, the beavers leave their houses and roam to considerable distances in quest of fresh food. The Indians avail themselves of these peregrinations and hunt them with the gun, gliding gently down the stream in small canoes, carefully avoiding all noise with their paddles and any thing which might startle them when they appear, at short intervals, on the surface of the water. The beaver is then often shot at a distance of 9 or 10 yards from the canoe and, if instantaneously killed, will immediately sink

to the bottom, and is lost to the hunter ; he must, therefore, be very quick in picking it up.

On small lakes, where beavers are very plentiful, they are caught in the following method : Circular holes of 3 or 4 feet diameter are made in the ice and at a convenient distance from the beaver houses ; around the edge of those holes, to the bottom of the water, long stakes of wood are stuck, so as to form a small circular enclosure, reserving only a small opening sufficient to admit the animal. The top of this hole is provided with a board so arranged as to fall when the beaver gets in and to completely shut up the hole, the hunter has then no further trouble than to fish it out with the point of his spear. To allure it into the enclosure, they generally place some green branches of the poplar or willow right in the center of it ; but this manner of taking them is practicable only in the months of February and March, when the mild weather entices the beavers out of their winter quarters for fresh food, their winter supply having become rather stale by this time.

Bear hunting.

The hunting of the bear is also an object of consequence with the Natives ; its skin, besides being a valuable article in trade, serves them in lieu of bed, the meat is excellent and the oil (of which it yields several gallons) is useful to anoint their hair and to rub their bodies, in order to defend them from musketoes. It is likewise used to season their dry and pounded meat or fish ; it is an excellent substitute for butter and makes even the poorest meat palatable.

Their general method of hunting the bear is with dogs, which are directed on the scent when a fresh track is discovered, and the hunter has then nothing to do but to follow. As this animal seldom outruns the dogs, when spent with fatigue and nearly overtaken, he generally climbs up the top of the tallest tree he

can find and, of course, falls an easy prey to the hunter, who is warned by the barking of the dogs.

In the spring, the bears frequent certain places where fish abound; here the hunters have only to ambush themselves morning and evening, and wait the instant to shoot the criminal, when he approaches the water side, in search of fish. They are likewise taken in traps at certain places where they resort in great numbers.

When the cold weather sets in, about the middle of November, they enter their winter habitations, from which they never stir before the month of April, unless the winter is uncommonly mild. The Indians assert, as an undoubted fact, that during these long months, these animals take no nourishment of any sort but what they derive from licking their paws, and, yet, turn out in spring just as fat as they were when they entered their winter quarters.

The other animals which are hunted on account of their skins are: otters, cats, fishers, martens, minks, foxes, wolverines and muskrats. Otters are generally shot with the gun, but the others are taken in traps, and often abandoned to the care of the women and children.

They fish with nets, hooks, lines and spears, but they have a method of taking sturgeon with a kind of drag-net or *seine*, which, I believe, is peculiar to themselves. The net use for this puspose is about 20 feet long by 6 feet deep, when shut double. It is dragged between two small canoes, having two men in each; while the bowmen paddle gently down the stream, the men in the sterns hold the *seines* by means of long cords, fixed to each end and which can be shortened or lenghtened according to the depth of the water and the wish of the *seineurs*. Two stones are suspended from the lower ends of the *seines*, by which the nature

Sturgeon fishing.

of the bottom and the soundings are ascertained, a very necessary precaution to keep the whole clear of foul bottom. The course of the canoes must form an obtuse angle with the middle of the *seine*.

Those nets are mounted like the English drag nets, with small knobs of cedar fixed to the upper border instead of cork. When, by the vibrations of the cords, they perceive that fish is taken, they instantly haul up and paddle with all their might to bring the canoes together and, thereby, shut up the fish in the *seine*. This method of fishing is, of course, practicable only in rivers, narrow channels and small bays, where the bottom is clear.

War.

The *Sauteux* have been from time immemorial at war with the Sciews, a populous nation inhabiting the country about the head of the Mississipi. It would probably be needless to enquire about the origin of their wars, as they have not the least tradition respecting the first causes of their ruptures. We may, however, suppose that they first quarrelled about their boundaries and renewed encroachments upon their respective hunting grounds.

Migration of the Sioux.

They assert as an undoubted fact that, formerly, the Sciews possessed the greatest part of the country, but, in course of time, as population increased, they emigrated to the westward in search of subsistance, where finding a vast uninhabited country, a milder climate and abundance of game, they remained and took possession of it, leaving behind only a few tribes, more attached to their native land. In this state, they say, their ancestors found the country when, for similar reasons, they emigrated from their ancient possessions to the eastward.

It would, therefore, appear quite probable that they may have quarrelled about their lands with the few Sciew tribes whom they found on their arrival, battles probably ensued, and the

Sciews, overpowered, were thrown back on the bulk of their nation at the head of the Mississipi. Be it as it may, it is, nevertheless, certain that an inveterate hatred has existed between the two nations, which will, probably, never terminate while both nations exist.

Some efforts have been made to mediate a peace between them, both by the Government and the Canadian traders. The leading chiefs of both nations were invited at Michilimakinac for that purpose, but neither arguments nor presents produced any other results than a partial cessation of hostilities for a few months.

The most trifling dispute between two individuals was always a subject of sufficient importance to renew the war, and, as they think it an indispensable duty to revenge on their enemies the death of their relations or friends who fell in battle, there is little hopes of seeing an end to this state of things. Their prejudices and superstition almost make it a duty to continue the bloody contest, as they imagine that an enemy killed by the father must necessarily be a slave to the son in the next world, and that a murderer is sure to make his peace with the offended party by presenting them with a scalp from the enemy.

While influenced by such powerful prejudices, we may naturally infer that no foreign agency will be of any avail to eradicate the inveterate and deep rooted hatred which has so long subsisted between the two nations.

Modes of warfare

When a war party is proposed, the chief despatches one of his young men with tobacco and the war pipe stem to such of the different tribes as are willing to revenge the death of their ancestors or relations who fell in battle; such as accept of the tobacco and smoke out of the pipe, are considered as soldiers

and must, in honour, assemble at some convenient place to celebrate the various ceremonies which are thought essential to the success of the expedition.

They consider the summer season, or the fall of the leaves, as the most favorable season for attacking the enemy, observing very sagaciously that, in case of defeat, in a winter season, the Sciews might easily surprise them by following their tracks in the snow, and as their enemies are more numerous, they would consequently be an over match for them in a regular or general battle.

In their marches, they observe the most exact discipline and the greatest precautions; no fires are kindled, no guns fired, when supposed within two days march of the enemy, for fear that the smoke or report would apprise the Sciews of their danger. If any vestige of a Sciew camp or village is discovered, the whole army immediately halt at a convenient place, and a scouting party is sent to ascertain their situation and strength. Should the report be favorable, the enemy is attacked a little before day light, while supposed asleep. Surprised in this manner, the most dreadful carnage ensues, without the least regard to sex, age or condition; the scalps of the slain are taken in a moment as trophies of the victory, and before the enemy can recover from their consternation, every one makes the best way back to his own country, where their exploits are celebrated by dancing, feasting and songs composed for the occasion.

If they suppose the enemy too strong, they think nothing of prudently retiring, quite satisfied if they have the chance of falling on a poor straggler, whether man, woman, or child, and procure a scalp, without loss to themselves. Their ideal of a good warrior is to know how to attack an enemy unawares and, in a retreat, to know how to baffle his pursuers by his superior cunning. Should they, however, be discovered and

obliged to fight a regular battle, they generally behave with great bravery, seldom asking or giving quarter.

A warrior who kills his antagonist and takes his scalp is considered a very brave man, but the war chief alone has the merit of the success of the enterprise, as well as the responsibility in case of any disaster by which he might lose a number of his men. Although he neither receives corporal punishment, nor is subjected to any public enquiry on his conduct, yet, he entirely loses the confidence of the nation and, consequently, falls into disgrace, unless he immediately retrieves his reputation by some extraordinary act of bravery against the enemies of his country, opportunities of which are never wanting.

The southern tribes, who live near the Sciews, are necessarily always under arms and continually skirmishing with the enemy, but the *Maskegons* and tribes farther to the north seldom go to war ; their small and scattered population makes it often difficult for them to muster a respectable party. Their great distance from the seat of war obliges them to make such considerable provisions for their families during their absence, (which cannot last less than thirty to forty days,) that their war parties are never formidable, generally from ten to one hundred strong. Sensible of their inferiority, they league themselves with their southern friends, or with the Assiniboines and Crees, two nations who have likewise waged eternal war with the Sciews.

The *Sauteux* have, properly speaking, no regular system of government, and but a very imperfect idea of the different ranks of society, so absolutely necessary in all civilized countries. Their leading men or chief magistrates are petty chiefs, whose dignity is hereditary, but whose authority is confined within the narrow circle of their own particular tribe or relations. **Government.**

There are no established laws to enforce obedience ; all is voluntary, and yet, such is their confidence and respect for their chiefs, that instances of mutiny or disobedience to orders are very rare among them. Those " great men " being considered as " Fathers " to their respective tribes, claim, as the Patriarchs of old, the same authority over their followers as fathers naturally have over their children.

The next in rank are the *Michinawois*, who act as secretaries or ambassadors on great public occasions. The chiefs never act as judges or legislators without the general consent of their young men or vassals, and are, therefore, not responsible for any public misfortune which might happen through mismanagement in national affairs. Their province is to preside at their public assemblies, to advise the young men and regulate matters respecting the war ; such are the narrow limits of their prerogatives, and yet they have as elevated ideas of their own importance as the most absolute monarch who ever wielded a sceptre.

They have nothing particular in their dress to distinguish them from the vulgar, except a wampum belt, worn only on great occasions, and a silver medal with Our Sovereign's head in relief on one side and the arms of Great Britain on the other. This sacred pledge of distinction is always worn about the neck, and carefully transmitted from father to son.

In the administration of justice they are very remiss, the judgment is often left to the option of the offended party. Murder is about the only crime in which the public take any concern, and even in this case, the chiefs or leading men seldom interfere, but leave the matter to the decision of the nearest relations of the deceased, who seldom fail to revenge the crime. If the murderer escapes, which is sometimes the case, they do not scruple to retaliate on some of his relations, and pretend

themselves perfectly satisfied and admit the murder justly avenged.

Though their language is not very copious, it is smooth and expressive, with a serious cast, like the genius of the people who speak it. It abounds with vowels; they cannot pronounce the consonants L, F and R; the letters K, Q, W and the broad A of the French frequently occur. They have no articles prefixed to their nouns, like our more cultivated European languages, nor do they distinguish them by particular termination, like the Latins; their interjections are numerous, and repeated on every trivial occasion. **Language**

When very angry or engaged in a dangerous entreprise, they have a certain manner of expressing themselves which proves the uncommon strength and energy of their language; for instance, they say "*Niwoibinnan-ni-ou*," which literally means, "I throw away my body" or "I throw myself away."

They generally express themselves, after the manner of the Orientals, by strong and lively metaphors, which never fail to command the attention of the audience, the greatest silence and decency is, therefore, observed in their councils or general assemblies.

They count as far as one thousand, but seem to have no further idea of numbers, they certainly have no more words to express them. In computing time, they reckon by winters and divide the year in four seasons viz: summer, autumn or the fall of the leaves; spring, or melting of the snow and winter. These are again subdivided into moons or months, which have in their language very significant names: *Abita pipone kigis*, or January, means "the half of winter moon." *Mikisi kijis*, or February, the "eagle moon", because about that time the eagles make their first appearance among them. *Nikak kijis*, or March, **Division of time and seasons.**

the "*Outarde* moon", because in the course of this month those fowls arrive on their lakes and rivers, and remain sometime before they take their flight to the northern regions.

The next division of their time are days and nights, which they divide again, instead of hours, into break of day, sunrise, morning, mid-day, evening, sunset, night and midnight.

It is here worthy of remark that, as they compute their years by winters, so they compute distances by the number of nights which the traveller has to sleep out in making a journey. They say, likewise, in speaking of an appointment of time, "you may expect me back in five nights," but never reckon by the number of days.

They likewise divide their months according to the different phases of the moon, which they say is dead when eclipsed, and, therefore, think it an act of piety to sing and beat the drum during the obscurity, by which they imagine that they bring it to life again.

V

Religion : *Kijai Manitou*, the " Master of Life," *Wiskendjac* and *Matchi Manitou.*—Immortality of the soul.—Inferior gods and Mediators. — Absolute faith in dreams. — The " grand religious festival " at *Lac la Pluie.*—The *Mitewie* ceremony, Indian Free Masonry.—The *Wabanoe.*—Care of the sick ; medecines.—Funeral ceremonies.—Respect and remembrance of the dead.

No people are more tenacious in their religious opinions, and less communicative on religious subjects than the *Sauteux.* To question them on such a subject is not only frivolous, in their opinion, but impertinent ; some will laugh and pretend ignorance on the subject, others will relate, with a most serious air, a long story of absurdities which they had by tradition from their ancestors.

Having no public priests nor any particular form of worship, many, as a consequence, deviate from the general opinion and either form new objects of worship of their own fancy, or remain satisfied with the acknowledgement of total ignorance of the mysteries of Divinity. Such dissenters, however, never doubt the propriety of the faith of their ancestors, imagining all religions good. But the following particulars seem to be universally believed by the generality of their tribes, and, therefore, may be regarded as " the national religion. "

Kijai Manitou, or the " Master of Life ", claims the first rank in their devotion : to him they attribute the creation of the heavens, *Kijai Manitou.*

of the waters and of that portion of the earth beyond the sea from which white people came, having by his will and pleasure created men, beasts and every thing belonging to his own particular district; he is also the author of life and death, taking pleasure in promoting the happiness of the virtuous, and having, likewise, the power of punishing the wicked.

Wiskend-jac,

Wiskendjac is next in power: he is said to be the Creator of all the Indian tribes, the country they inhabit and all it contains, but I never heard that this august personage enjoyed any other prerogative, nor claimed any of their worship, beyond a certain veneration or gratitude for the signal services he had done for them.

Matchi Manitou.

The last of their deities is called *Matchi Manitou*, or the "Bad Spirit." He is the author of all evil, but subject to the control of *Kijai Manitou.* Though he is justly held in great detestation, it is thought good policy to smooth his anger by singing and beating the drum, which *complaisance* effectually charms him and diverts his malice to some other object. The Master of Life being naturally good and worthy of all their devotions, is supposed to wink at such liberties, if not repeated too often.

These Deities had no beginning; the two first are represented as young men, and will continue so to the end of time; as to *Machi Manitou*, he is as terrible and disgusting in his person as he is wicked in his dispositions, and will remain so to the end of time.

Future Life.

They believe in a future state and the immortality of the soul, and say that death is no evil, but a certain state that ensures a passage from this world to a better one, where good Indians will enjoy superior happiness. When life leaves the body, the soul immediately goes to the southward, to a delightful country

stocked with the choicest game and all things necessary for the happiness of man, and where *Kijai Manitou* receives them on the banks of a beautiful river. Here he keeps his court and judges mankind according to its deserts; the wicked Indians he delivers over to *Machi Manitou*, who receives them under the earth in a wretched dungeon swarming with serpents, and where the poor souls endure every degree of misery, while the good are immediately released from any future dread of pain, and enjoy every pleasure which the heart of man can desire.

Before they arrive at this desired Paradise, many precautions must be observed. They must cross the river on a single pole, laid across as a bridge, and carry all their wicked deed in a bundle on their back; if the bundle is too heavy, the unfortunate bearer is apt to stumble and fall in the river, whose rapid stream sweeps him along into the dreary regions, where he must for ever remain under the dominion of the "Bad Spirit." Infants or persons very old and infirm are naturally supposed unable to pass the bridge, but if they were persons of good behaviour before their death, the Master of Life takes pity on them and kindly helps them over.

The souls must have provisions and other necessaries for their journey to Paradise, as they are supposed to travel several days before they arrive at the river On their arrival at the bridge, they are presented with some choice provisions, which they must refuse, whatever may be their hunger, under pain of being delivered to the Bad Spirit. All the Sciews they killed in war are supposed to attend them as slaves to the other world, where husbands live with their wives and children, where society exists as it did before death, having only passed from a mortal, precarious state into an everlasting life where there will never be a change.

Kijai Manitou, or The Master of Life, rules the universe by *Michinawois* or agents; two of the most considerable carry the **The Sun and the Moon.**

sun and the moon around the earth; they suppose the two former consist of metal and were made by the Master of Life for our convenience. I once observed to them that, as metal is naturally deficient of the properties of heat, it could not emit the least degree of warmth and, much less, the powerful heat of the sun, that it was, therefore, more rational to believe with the white men that the sun is a large globe of fire. They insisted, however, that it was brass, and that *Kijai Manitou*, by his almighty power, infused into it the properties of heat.

The superior education of the civilized man must give him better ideas of nature than ever the poor simple savage can acquire, hence the astonishment and superstitious veneration of the latter for the terrible and the sublime, whether the production of nature or of art. They regard thunder as an inferior divinity, which they represent under the figure of a bird, very powerful and dangerous, but which, they say, can be frightened away by the virtue of certain charms.

Inferior gods; mediators. They have several other demi gods or patrons, whose agency is solely confined to certain actions of their lives, and are adopted or neglected occasionally, according to the confidence or caprice of each individual. They are supposed to be powerful protectors against many of the miseries and adversities of life and, likewise, mediators between them and the Master of Life. Those Penates, (for I consider them as such,) are selected from among beasts, birds or even inanimate objects, such as remarkable stones or trees, &c.; the generality prefer small wooden human figures, painted with vermilion, which they carefully keep in a wooden box, wrapped up in swansdown and kept in their medecine bag. This precious bag is particularly consecrated to the *Manitou*, and is supposed, likewise, to contain no small portion of the spirit of the Divinity.

Among animals, the bear and serpent are often distinguished with this extraordinary honor. I knew an Indian who never would kill a bear because he had adopted one of those animals as his patron, but, should he find any in his hunting excursions, he would make no difficulty to direct any other person to pursue and kill it. Numbers of them adopt the crow, and wear the skin of it, as a charm, about their heads.

All persons of note have their medecine bags and patrons, which they think highly necessary for the protection of their families. They are, indeed, seldom worshipped, but no one must speak of them with disrespect, as they would probably be punished by *Kijai Manitou* for their presumption.

Absolute faith in dreams

They have the greatest faith in dreams, by which they imagine that the Deity informs them of future events, enjoins them certain penances and even inspires or encourages them in their most difficult and hazardous enterprizes. They pretend that our method of conveying our sentiments by reading and writing has originally been acquired in a dream. I have known several instances of some of their men who, by virtue of some extraordinary dream, had been affected to such a degree as to abandon every custom characteristic of their sex and adopt the dress and manners of the women. They are never ridiculed or despised by the men on account of their new costumes, but are, on the contrary, respected as saints, or beings in some degree inspired by the *Manitou*, yet, in other respects, they are merely considered as women and are never allowed the privileges refused the latter. It is really amusing to see stout strapping fellows of this order, nursing children, garnishing and making shoes, imitating the women in all their employments, even assuming the shrill tone of their voice, and walking with their toes inclined inwards.

Religious ceremonies

At their public assemblies, their chiefs or old men officiate as priests; they address the "Master of life" in long and eloquent speeches, thank him for the blessings they enjoy, and implore his protection against the malice of their enemies. Songs and hymns, composed upon sacred subjects, are then sung, accompanied with the drum and rattle, and the service generally concludes with the distribution of a feast and several rounds of smoking. When performing this last part of the ceremony, it is necessary, before smoking, to incline the stem of the pipe towards the south, no doubt as an offering to *Kijai Manitou*, who is supposed to reside in that part of the Heavens, then towards the earth, the rising and setting of the sun, after which the performer smokes a few whiffs and gives the stem to the next person.

Grand Festival at *Lac la Pluie.*

I was once present during the celebration of a grand religious ceremony by the late chief of *La Pluie*, previous to his going to war, at the head of a large party. For this purpose, a large lodge was erected at a small distance from the camp, from which the women and children were necessarily excluded. In the middle of the lodge was an oval frame made of twisted hay and clay, surrounding a neat hearth of very fine sand, on which a fire was made. A narrow space, about two feet broad, was reserved around the hearth and swept very clean, the remainder of the lodge was carefully covered with the tender branches of the pine tree, over which bear skins, blankets &c. were spread, as seats.

A small place, at the extremity of the lodge and right opposite the door, was reserved as a repository for their medicine bags and idols. Those sacred bags consisted of bear, beaver, otter, fisher and marten skins stuffed up so as to give them life appearance and ornamented with feathers, porcupine quills, &c. A kind of semi circular chapel consisting of small polished sticks, curiously ornamented and fixed perpendicular in the ground,

surrounded the whole. The medecine bags were all in a row, in front of which was placed a large stone daubed with vermilion and surrounded with small wooden images of men, serpents and birds. I thought the whole of a pleasing and solemn appearance.

Things being thus prepared, a day was appointed for the ceremony and we were all invited to attend, by means of a painted quill presented to each of us by the *Michinawois*, who told us at the same time to bring our smoking pipes. On entering we took our seats indiscriminately around the hearth ; the chief *Michinawois* and a few old men sat next to the sacred medecine bags, and collected all our pipes as we entered the lodge. All were, on this occasion, painted and dressed in their very best ; the principal men were distinguished by a bunch of swansdown powdered with vermilion, and fixed directly on the forehead.

Though I was admitted as a mere spectator, they gave me to understand that they expected my attendance till day light, and that I should assist them in the ceremonies necessary on the occasion. As I had no inclination to disoblige, and being besides sensible to the honor they had done me, I cheerfully acquiesced, which seemed to please them very much.

All being assembled, the ceremoy began at dusk in the following manner. The *Michinawois* having prepared a quantity of tobacco, ready mixed, filled a pipe and lighted it carefully with a splinter of cedar wood. After making the necessary ceremonies with the stem, he smoked a few whiffs and presented it to next person on his left, who, after repeating the same ceremonies, gave it to the next, and in this manner it soon went around the whole circle, the *Michinawois* having passed all the pipes in his custody before the first pipe come back to him. The same ceremonies continued until all where empty, after which they were carefully cleaned and laid by for further use. I observed

that a very particular regard and veneration was shown to the painted stone already mentioned, during the whole smoking match.

We were next entertained with songs accompanied with drums and rattles. The performers on these sacred instruments were the most considerable men among them : the women and children, who had previously surrounded the lodge, joined chorus at certain intervals, which had a very pleasing effect. Smoking and singing were alternately repeated in this manner for the first part of the night ; we were then entertained with a feast consisting of wild rice, pounded meat, bear's fat and sugar, all mixed in a large kettle, which the *Michinawois* himself distributed to the company, not, indeed, by their ordinary custom of giving each individual his share on a separate dish, but in this particular occasion, the feast was too sacred to be polluted with either dishes, spoons or even the fingers of the profane, the Michinawois alone, as the immediate minister of the ceremony, could presume to handle it. He, therefore, cautiously took the kettle in one hand, while, with great solemnity, he crammed the other in the kettle, taking a small portion of the victuals between his fingers and forcing it in the mouths of the company as he went around the circle. I would have heartily wished to be excused from this part of the ceremony, but, well knowing the necessity of a cheerful compliance, I made a virtue of necessity and acquitted myself to their satisfaction, though I felt very near throwing up, as the victuals would, by themselves, have been exceedingly nauseous, even if served in a more decent manner.

These ceremonies were continued without intermission till near daylight, when a young man, who had killed his brother a few days before in a drunken frolick, abruptly entered the lodge. In his right hand he carried a branch of birch, very curiously

ornamented with feathers, ribands &c. His aspect was uncommonly melancholy; he advanced, dancing and capering around the hearth, roaring and lamenting like a Bedlamite. After allowing him to indulge in this manner for some time, the chief got up and, after making a short speech, joined the stranger in his caperings; he cried and sobbed in the most pitiful manner, tears could easily be seen running down his cheeks.

After acting this farce for a considerable time, both seemed heartily tired; the chief sat down in his place, and the young man retired from the lodge.

Another smoking match and songs succeeded, and also another feast, to which, this time, all were permitted to partake in his own manner, concluded the ceremony. The chief having addressed a long speech to the Master of Life, the company dispersed each retiring in the order they came in, and making a small salutation with the right hand to the repository of the sacred idols, thanking them in an audible voice which was echoed by those still present.

The *Mitewie* is a mysterious ceremony, rather of the nature of our Free Masonry, but with this remarkable difference that both sexes are equally admitted as members. Those who put up for candidates must be of a respectable footing in society, and make presents to satisfy the number of members requisite to constitute the meeting of the Order. They seldom or never meet to celebrate this ceremony except when a candidate is to be initiated.

The *Mitewie* ceremony.

On this occasion a spacious lodge is prepared in which several long poles are suspended in the manner of a scaffold, on which the different presents are exposed to view. All the members, dressed and painted as on all great occasions, go to this lodge in procession and preceded by drums, and, rattles. They take their seats indiscriminately on each side of the lodge, the men

on one side, and the women on the other. The oldest and most considerable men generally begin the ceremony by singing and beating the drum. After beating the drum for a considerable time, one of the fraternity gets up and gently dances right opposite the music, and, by degrees, a whole group of dancers join, keeping exact time with the drum and, when heartily tired, quietly sit down in their places and smoke their pipes, without observing any particular ceremony. After breathing a little, the drummers summon up the dancers again, and the new members are allowed to join the dance.

The same ceremony continues with very little variations the greater part of the day, but when it is thought necessary to bring matters to a conclusion, the drums are laid aside for a moment, a smoking match takes place and a general silence prevails in the lodge, which is interrupted by one of the mem bers getting up, holding his medecine bag in a horizontal position before him and at the same time running with a short quick step round the lodge, articulating unintelligible sounds as he proceeds. After parading two or three times around in this manner, he shakes his bag with great dexterity, makes a push with it towards one of the members and immediately retires to his seat.

The person pointed at pretends to be affected in an extraordinary manner; he groans, inclines his head in a languishing manner on his breast, or falls prostrate on the earth; he sometimes, indeed, contents himself with a little jerk backwards of the head, but always muttering something to himself, expressing his gratitude to the person who gave him the pretended shock. The same cheat is carried on until every member present has acted his part, and the newly adopted member properly instructed in the mystery.

it is perhaps needless to remark that none but members ever presume to enter the lodge; the others are permitted to stand

at the door and look at the performers as long as they please. Such as are not in the secret never presume to doubt the miraculous virtue of their medicine bags, and great pains are taken by those honorable members to improve such opinion.

The *Wabanoe* is another order of impostors who pretend, by virtue of their medecine bags, to baffle all the secret machinations of their most inveterate enemies, and even to kill them at pleasure without being detected. They have a certain root with which they rub the hands, feet, mouth or any other part of the body, and which has the peculiar property of rendering such parts so insensible for a few minutes as even to bear the effect of fire without the least feeling or injury, to the astonishment of those who are not in the secret; they have also their particular songs on this occasion, accompanied with music and dancing. **The *Wabanoe*.**

See : D. Cameron. "The Nipigon Country" **Conjurors**

Except consumption and the king's evil, with such complaints as naturally follow excessive fatigue and famine, they are perfect strangers to our long catalogue of diseases. On the least symptom of sickness they have immediate recourse to medecine. Their old men and women act, occasionally, both as surgeons and physicians, and are always well provided with proper roots and herbs, which they administer to their patients with success. Purges and vomits are prescribed almost in all cases, and when bleeding is thought necessary, they perform it very dexterously with a flint. For violent pains in the temples, they make incisions with a flint on the parts affected and suck the blood by means of a small tube of horn. I have often experienced the good effects of this method. **Their doctors and medecines.**

For curing green wounds and burns, they are equally happy, but in very desperate cases their medical acknowledge is defi-

cient, they have then recourse to superstitious charms, and imagine that songs or offerings to their particular patrons will effectually remove the malady. It is very singular that they seldom impute sickness to any natural cause, but, on the contrary, imagine that some person has bewitched them, or thrown bad medecines in their way.

When at the last extremity and death seems inevitable, the principal men assemble with their medecine bags, drums and rattles, which they accompany with the death song, to encourage the departing soul on his journey to the next world.

Funeral ceremonies

When life is gone, the body is addressed by some friend of the deceased in a long speech in which he begs of him to take courage and boldly pursue his journey to the great meadow, observing that all his departed friends and relations are anxiously waiting to receive him, and that his surviving friends will soon follow.

The body is then decently dressed and wrapped in a new blanket, with new shoes garnished, and painted with vermilion on the feet. It is kept for one night in the lodge, and is next day buried in the earth. The nearest relations bear it to the grave, in which it is wrapped up in birch bark instead of a coffin, carefully laying his medecine bag under the head. Some bury kettles, guns, axes and various other articles with the body, but this custom is not general. Before the grave is shut, the nearest relation takes a lock of the deceased's hair and carefully wraps it up in a piece of cloth or blanket; this they continually carry with them from place to place and keep many years as a remembrance. This pledge of their affection is particularly honored at their feasts and drinking matches by having the first offerings of their meat and drink.

They either raise a pile of wood over the grave, or inclose it with a fence; at the head of the grave a small post is erected

on which they carve the particular mark of the tribe to whom the deceased belonged. The bodies of some of their most celebrated chiefs are raised upon high scaffolds, with flags flying and the scalps of their enemies, with other trophies of their prowess, suspended from a high pole, but all those monuments are not intended so much to distinguish their great men from the vulgar as to ensure to their departed souls the same respectability in the next world which they enjoyed in this.

It is customary with their warriors at the funeral of their great men to strike the post and relate all their martial achievements as they do in the war dance, and their funeral ceremonies generally conclude by a feast around the grave.

Respect for the dead.

Their affection towards their departed friends is seldom obliterated from their mind, and it is very common to see them resorting to the tombs of persons dead thirty or forty years before, and honoring their memory with a feast, or paying them a pious tribute of tears and lamentations. In their mourning, they paint their faces black, wear no ornaments and let the hair fall carelessly about the face. They, likewise, stab their thighs, legs, and arms in a cruel manner ; the women, for the loss of a husband or a favorite child, will cut all their hair, and both sexes wear a black string around their writs and ankles. All their effects, except those which are absolutely necessary, are voluntarily thrown away, and may be taken by whoever chooses ; they even carry their sorrow so far as to neglect the necessary duties of the chase, by which they expose themselves to suffer the cruel cravings of hunger during a long winter, and will often run the risk of literally starving were not some charitable persons found to support them.

If the mind dwells with pleasure on those proofs of sincere attachment to the memory of departed friends, it cannot but

deplore their cruel prejudices and inhuman conduct towards their aged and infirm. They, indeed, greatly respect their old men while they are of some use in society, but if, from extreme age or other infirmity, they become incapacitated to follow them in their encampments, they are then considered as dead to society, and their nearest relations think themselves no longer bound to maintain them; in this case a temporary shade is provided for them, with provisions and necessaires to prolong their miserable existence for a few days, and they are abandoned for ever. Any kindness or assistance to those poor wretched exiles would meet with the utmost ridicule from their relatives; they would think it a more meritorious action to knock them out of the world at once. Some indeed, with more humanity, prefer leaving their condemned relatives with the white people, but are quite indifferent about what becomes of them aftewards.

Mr. JAMES McKENZIE

EXTRACTS FROM HIS JOURNAL

1799-1800

ATHABASCA DISTRICT

Mr. JAMES McKENZIE'S [1]

JOURNAL

Fort Chippewean.

.... 1799.

.... OCTOBER 8th The climate

....................The ice began to drift down the river, for the first time this fall.

24th The trade.

Took an inventory of all the goods remaining in the Indian shop, and afterwards suspended them in the garret *à l'abri des souris.* I took this inventory now in order to find out the expenses incurred this fall. When I began to give credits to the Indians, I had put aside a sort of small equipment to be given gratis, so as to save me the trouble of making an account current, but Cadien who assisted me was such a hurly-burly

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(1) See : First series, " Reminiscences." page 56.

This journal has some interest as it gives a good idea of the North-West Company's mode of dealing with the Indians, and also, of the relations which, in some quarters, existed between the clerks and *engagés* of the Company and between the men themselves. It also shows the nature of the trade warfare which was carried on for several years between the two sections of the North-West Company and the means which men, otherwise honorable in life, were willing to have recourse to in order to defeat their opponents in trade.

After reading of the excesses which were committed in the North-West during those troubled times, and under a system of an unregulated competition which made the introduction of liquor an almost necessary condition of success, one may not be surprised at the rapid demoralization of the *coureurs des bois* and of the Indian tribes under the New Regime.

Officers and clerks of the Hudson Bay Company and of the two North-West Companies scrupled not, in the interest of their trade, to have recourse to means which

fellow that, while giving the credits, he would sometimes give things for nothing out of the equipment intended to be given on credit, and sometimes give on credit out of that which was intended to be given for nothing.

Got two cases of guns properly arranged, of which they had a great need being so rusty that the rust had already penetrated through the *fourreaux*, which could not be taken off except in pieces..

....

NOVEMBER 12th
Treatment of the *voyageurs*

This morning we tried to set the nets under the ice, but could not, on account of the quantity of drift ice running underneath that already taken. While we were busy about the nets, Can-

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common decency repudiates ; is it then surprising if the men, whose education was, of necessity, inferior, should, in many instances, have lost that sense of moral rectitude which, under a better system, they might in some degree have preserved ? As to the untutored Indian races, it would have been marvellous if they had resisted such demoralizing influences.

A young clerk stationed at Fort Alexandria, on the Assiniboine, in 1800, and who afterwards became a most influential member of the North-West Company, writes in his daily journal :

" December, Sunday, 14th.—Still a finer day than yesterday ; the sun really heated very much, and it even thawed where the sun did not shine. Early in the morning, Desmarais' brother-in-law and *Crapaud* came to the fort with three young Stone Indians ; they are come from the upper part of the lakes of the River *Qui appelle* ; the three Stone Indians were sent by the old men of their camp to tell the Hudson's Bay people at the Elbow to go with goods, liquor, &c. to trade with them. They had a paper which Sutherland gave them last autumn, which I got from them to look at, and which I tore and threw into the fire, and I prevailed on them not to go to the Elbow."

It does not even seem to have struck him that there was something wrong in the proceeding. Good returns were expected from him as well as from the others, and good returns he must have ; his promotion depended on his activity.

See : *Esquisse Historique*, pages 44-48.

Mr. James McKenzie appears to have entertained more than an ordinary share of prejudice against the " Canadian " *voyageurs* and *engagés* of the Company, but he generally expresses his ill feeling in a language so violent that it takes away from his utterances and appreciation much of their value. With all their faults and defects, the *voyageurs* had qualities highly appreciated by less prejudiced and no less well informed North-Westers.

taras arrived from *Pointe de roche;* Mandeville, Labrie and Lattenville, from the Old Fort, and Cadien Blanc, from Bustard Island; At *Pointe de roche* they have lost three nets; at the Old Fort six, and are come for others. Those nets were lost in the ice. When they set them, they thought the ice was strong, but *par malheur*, it was not, and the first *coup de-vent* carried all away. I thought it useless to quarrel them for their negligence, as it is as just that they should pay them as it is to make them pay an empty corn bag or a canoe awl which they lost between this and *Lac la Pluie.* I therefore gave them other nets as they cannot live without.

Cadien has killed only 10 white fish since his departure. His share of these has not fattened him, and a Canadian is seldom pleased *quand il n'engraisse pas.* Cantaras is like a skeleton, he lived all the fall upon berries. Labrie sent us 100 white fish.

....

Dusablon and Mandeville went off for the Old Fort; Lambert went with his *Bona Roba* to gather moss for their sons, the fruit of their love, and darlings of their lives, observing very wisely that, as their stock of moss was almost finished, it is better to go now, while the weather is warm, than in the depth of winter, when it must be dug out of the snow with their hands (1). "*C'est mieux d'avoir plus que moins qu'il faut; ça servira toujours.*" Soon after he arrived with a huge load on his back, while *Madame* walked slowly behind, carrying nothing but her little snarling brat. *Masquasis*, seeing him arrive thus accoutred, observed that Lambert wanted nothing more to make him a woman than a cloak with a red lining over a black fringe. **Voyageurs' women.**

....

There being nothing for me to do and nobody expected here, the 24th I went to the Old Fort; remained there all the day **26th Consumption of fish.**

(1) For the children's cradles. See: Peter Grant, "The Sauteux Indians."

yesterday, so as to see how they fished, and returned this day. F. Labrie has continually got 6 nets in the water, in which he generally catches 100 white fish, daily. *La Bécasse* has 3 nets in water and generally takes 60 pieces daily. *L'Espagnol* and Joseph Bouché have only 2 nets in which they catch about 40 pieces every day. Their nets are set behind the Little Island, which is before the fort. They went to visit them yesterday about an hour before day light and returned a little before sunrise, whereas they told us here more than once that they took the whole day to visit their nets. I went to see them while they were about it, the morning was very cold, which made them often rub their hands and put on very wry faces by way of remedy for the pain they felt.

In Labrie's house there are 5 men, a women and three children in *La Becasse's* house, there are 3 men and 3 women, and in *L'Espagnol's* there are 2 men and 2 women. In the first of these houses they eat about 35 white fish every day, in the second 20, and the last about 15. All these they devour in three meals, and sometimes in only one, but that is regulated by the surfeity they take at a time, which are not always equal.

The men do not agree. They seem to owe a grudge to each other in the different houses; they never pay a visit to one another, and if their affairs oblige them sometimes to exchange a few words with one another, it must be without doors. Even the two brothers (the two Labries), have not spoken in amiable terms to one another since last fall. In short, tney are as sulky as bears, but, to do them justice, they were not so to me; on the contrary, I was very politely treated by them. My description of them and of their actions may seem a bad return for their kindness; however, I have one thing in my favor, which is that all I have said to their prejudice is true, and the journal is intended to contain every

thing that is true about the Frenchmen.................................
....

Early this morning, *Trois Pouces*' young men went off. Soon after *Biguillazé*, who had been sick here since about 10 days ago, went away; at dark, Lambert, going to visit his traps, found Little Labrie at *la Pointe aux Chiens*, on a *traine* and carried by this Indian, who found him at the entrance of *Rivière des Brochets*, almost frozen to death and being already unable to walk, through hunger and cold. He left the Beaver's lodge about 6 days ago, during which time he ate nothing and only made a fire for two nights; the rest of the time he slept without fire and without anything to cover himself but his usual dress; yet, he carefully carried on his back two new blankets, 1 pr leggins, one pair of shoes, but preferred freezing himself to death to making use of them. DECEMBER. 6th. Cruelty and starvation.

He was carried into Cadien Leblanc's house and his feet, which he had been busy cutting with his axe when he was found, and which were as hard as stones, were put in cold water. When put into the water, he enquired whether his *petite hache* was safe, as he was more anxious about it than about his own body, which was far from being so. I must not omit telling here that the Beaver behaved to this poor fellow in a rascally manner. He first took his tobacco and ammunition from him and then told him to set off at once for the fort, which he accordingly did, but would never have arrived had he not been, by mere chance, discovered by the Indian who brought him here.

This morning early, Lambert set out for the Old Fort to inform the two Ladies of their brother's fate. Joseph Bouché arrived from the Old Fort, he has brought, at different times, upwards of 200 white fish for himself and Cadien LeBlanc. St André came from *Pointe de Roche* ; bad fishery there. 7th.

Little Labrie's feet are still soaking in cold water but retain their hardness ; we watched him all last night ; he fainted often in the course of the night, but we always brought him to life again by the help of mulled wine. Once, in particular, when he found himself very weak and sick, and thought he was dying, he said : *Adieu ! je m'en va : tout mon bien à ceux qui ont soin de moi.*

....

16th About 12 o'clock, P. Labrie was freed from all his agonies in this world. Lambert set off to inform his brother of his exit. Dusablon made him a coffin ; this old fellow was asleep at the time he expired, a sure sign of the little attention he paid to his patient whom he undertook to cure. Lottinville arrived to cut his wood.

17th Before day light this morning Felix Labrie, Parrenteau, Mandeville and Lambert arrived ; about 12 o'clock Jos. Labrie arrived. Felix bawled and yelled at a hideous rate ; his eyes, which are naturally red and seem as if they were turned inside out, were much more so on this occasion through excess of rubbing, shed involuntary tears. *Pourtant*, said he to Lambert, *j'avais fait toutes sortes de duretés à mon pauvre défunt frère Pierrot, l'automne passé, pour tâcher de le faire rester avec moi.* Perhaps he had taken his *pauvre défunt frère Pierrot* for a dog, the more he is ill treated the more he attaches himself to the hand which ill treats him.

Joseph behaved with more decency than his brother, his sorrow seemed to flow more from his heart than from his mouth and eyes. As soon as the first effusions of feigned grief were over, they began to divide the deceased's money between themselves in the house were the corpse was. To tell the truth about them, they are at best but unfeeling, not to call them savage beings...

....

Three men were this day employed, but to no purpose, to dig a grave among the rocks behind the Fort. I told them before they began that the prettiest as well as the easiest place to dig a grave would be on *Pointe au sable*, but, with that spirit of contradiction which is peculiar to all Frenchmen, they, every one of them, denied it, at the same time ridiculing me for proposing to inter *un Français*, who, by being so, is sacred, on a piece of land where the Indians always encamped, and might profane his tomb by scraping skins on it, &c., &c.

This morning, about 9 o'clock, P. Labrie was buried on the 18th.
Pointe au sable. The poor man lived a miser, left 2800 *livres* and was interred with no greater expense than 1 phial rum, a coarse linen shirt and his length of Felix's old Ber (?) though I told them there was no scarcity of Russia sheeting in the shop. His body, which was swelled and full of blood, emitted an intolerable stench; yet, that old cannibal Dusablon, after wrapping it in its lining and putting it into the coffin, and without washing his hands, which where still covered with blood, cut fish into small pieces and put them in the kettle, of which they all partook and seemed to relish it with the avidity of Esquimaux.

.... 31st.

New Year's Day preparations.

Great preparations going on here this night for to-morrow, which is New Year's Day. Dusablon, with hands which have not seen a drop of water since last New Year's Day, made a large kettle full of *boulettes* of fish, each as big and as ill-shaped as his own head. Lambert made fish cakes, *alias* "*pêtes*," boiled for an hour with dried meat. *Masquaro* made the fire, drew water and cleaned shoes, &c. Mr. Wentzel and I were continually running from the shop to the *hangard*, from the *hangard* to the garret, from thence to the kitchen; in short, every body in the house had a finger in the pie and were as busy all night as *une queue de veau.*

1800. January 1st, "New Year's Day." This morning before day break, the men, according to custom, fired two broadsides in honor of the New Year, and then came in to be rewarded with rum, as usual. Some of them could hardly stand alone before they went away such was the effect of the juice of the grape on their brains. After dinner, at which every body helped themselves so plentifully that nothing remained to the dogs, they had a bowl of punch. The expenses of this day with fourteen men and women are : 6½ fathoms spencer twist, 7 flagons rum, 1 ditto wine, 1 ham, a skin's worth of dried meat, about 40 white fish, flour, sugar, &c. Felix Labrie whose beard, from *chagrin* for his brother's death, is as long as my pen, was the first that began to drink and sing, and the last who gave up that farce. He is a gentleman who stands upon no ceremony ; he was not backwards in taking along with him to his own house the punch which remained in the bowl, and, there, drink it.

This morning, after drinking the first dram, this turbulent, ungrateful man began to spoil the pleasure of our entertainment by insulting and challenging to fight Lambert, the man to whom, of all present, he was most obliged to from the many services he rendered him on account of his deceased brother. The reason Labrie insulted Lambert was that the latter told him that he refused to help in plastering a house for P. Labrie, his brother, as he could have done it instead of playing cards at his feet......

....

14th. I thought it high time, since St Germain has taken another hunter, to send up Mr. Wentzel without waiting the different express arrivals. This morning I sent Lambert for Mandeville to the Little Island, to set off with him for the Forks after tomorrow, as this man offered himself the last time he was here. After dark, two young men arrived from the "Beaver" whom they left at Slave River ; the Beaver sent them to ask if Pierre

Labrie was arrived and to tell, if he was not, that he would be ashamed (1); a fine time, indeed, to enquire about him, a month after he had left them.—Reprimanded them for allowing him to come alone to the fort; they said it was that bad man the Beaver's fault, for they were like slaves to him and could do nothing without his consent. Gave them a piece of tobacco, &c.

The Beaver sent by these young men twenty-two skins of his credits and also three skins worth fresh meat; gave them each a piece of tobacco, a flint &c, and sent the Beaver 1½ foot of tabacco, with repeated assurance that, if he behaved well and came to the fort the usual season, nothing would be done him worse than paying whatever he brought besides his credits. 15th. Guilty Indians left unpunished.

I know, if I don't clear myself by giving proper reasons for my thus countenancing the contribution to a man's death, that I will run the risk to be severely censured by divines and moralists of the age, as well as of the country in which I live. I must, therefore, tell these devout gentlemen in as few words as I can that, could I have considered myself as a private man, divested of any other employment or duty than that of an independent man, then I would not do what I have done, but, being a clerk in the North-West Company, bound to forward their interest in every respect to the utmost of my power, I could not, in consequence, think it consistent with my duty or their interest to make them lose a pack or two by ill treating these Indians for the sake of a man who never gained them one farthing in his life, and whom we could not revive.

....

This morning, Charles Cadien's comrade arrived and paid 62 skins peltries and 4 do Mt credits. He was so haughty on his arrival on account of his skins that he threw the tobacco I gave 16th.

(1) Sorry, disappointed.

him in my face, saying it was not good, and that I lied when I said there was none better in the fort. The men's advice, though not asked, was to pack the piece of tobacco into the Indian's nose, or give him a kicking for his bad breeding, which, they said, from *Monsieur MacClause* or *Monsieur MacKancie* would meet with this punishment. This rough usage I thought bad encouragement for him to kill more beaver, and a very indifferent recompense for those he had already brought, which I think made ample amends for his insults. However, in case he might do the like again, perhaps when he had no such substantial atonement to offer, I told him to take care and not behave so impudently in future.

....

22nd. The *engagés.* Vermette and Parrenteau arrived from Little Island ; soon after arrived that man *sans souci* Beauchemin. The men at *Pointe de Roche* turned this *estatue* off at the beginning of winter because he would do nothing but sleep and eat, and, *enfin*, Labrie who took him then *en pique.* sent him again about his business for the same reason. Having no other resources left for his maintenance he has come here to consult about the easiest and best method to be adopted under the circumstances. As he is a stout, lusty numskull, my *conseil* was to go to *Pointe de Roche* immediately, and if the men there refused to give him his share of the *agrès*, or feed him, that he might force them to do either by foul means ; he promised compliance. He made several of the men at *Pointe de Roche serrer la queue* already. Snowed all day.

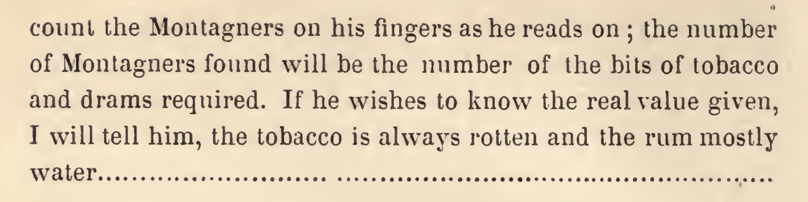
31st As we were going to bed, Laprise and a Beaver Indian arrived from the Slave Country gentlemen with letters : they left Slave Lake 13 days ago. Gave Laprise one foot of tobacco and a piece to the Indian, with a dram &c. &c. Laprise had about 6 pounds of pimecan remaining, which he delivered.

This is my 5th year in this country, and I have seen often enough men arriving from voyages, yet, this is the first of them I have seen deliver any remainder of provisions. When they leave a post, they take good care to be provided with more provisions than they can easily cram into themselves till they arrive at the next, but when they come to the next post, if they are asked, *avez vous manqué de vivres ou avez vous eu assez*, their answer is, *j'avons eu assez, mais j'avons mangé la dernière bouchée hier soir*, or, if they want to get something to eat immediately on arrival, there are generally two *soirées depuis qu'ils ont rien mis dans leur corps*

....

Same weather as the two days past; snow melting fast on the houses. At night, two Montagners arrived from their lands; they have a small *traine* between them, which I suppose they lugged along in turns. They are shabby looking fellows. The first thing they told us was that all their relations were dead, which rids the world of a number of rascals. I questioned them all the *veillée* about those Montagners they left on their land; although they be all dead, yet I am in hopes they will all rise again from the dead to give accounts of their actions while in this world, but these stupid fellows who unworthily survived the fate of all the rest could give no satisfactory account. What they told one moment, they contradicted the next, so that I was not a bit wiser when I finished than when I commenced. FABRUARY 17th. The Indians

It is unnecessary telling always in the journal that every Indian who arrives, whether good, bad, or indifferent, gets a bit of tobacco and a dram; it suffices to tell, once, that it is the custom of the place, and any one who reads of an Indian's arrival may suppose that this custom is followed, and, should he wish to know how many bits of tobacco and drams were expended, he can Liquor


count the Montagners on his fingers as he reads on ; the number of Montagners found will be the number of the bits of tobacco and drams required. If he wishes to know the real value given, I will tell him, the tobacco is always rotten and the rum mostly water...

....

MARCH 28th The *Bourgeois* and the clerk

Sent Marlin 15 measures mixed rum and 3 feet tobacco. Now, for you, Antithesis Philosophers, who are forever moved by the spirit of contradiction, and feel an itching to find fault where there is none, here is a fine occasion to show your wonderful parts and produce something worthy of your sect. Sending rum to the Indians, according to you, is an unpardonable error in a poor fellow's conduct ; – but may he beg leave, Gentlemen, to ask yon a few plain questions by way of vindication of his supposed error ? Pray then ! will 19 packs of fine beaver have no weight in your debates ? if they will not, I am sure they will in the Gentlemen of the North-West Company's pockets, when reduced into hard cash.

What is the reason you fret so much about sending rum to the Indians more than other goods ? is it because 7 parts of the 8 of this rum are pure water, of course, less expensive to the Company and more pleasing to the Indians than other goods ? No, Gentlemen, I suppose you will say it is because it debauches the Indians and renders them troublesome. But can sending a small keg inland by a clerk debauch them more than giving them a large keg in the fall and spring by a *Bourgeois*, at the Fort, while the Clerk who succeeds him is limited to give him a smaller quantity in a kettle ?

If the Indians be spoiled, it is the *Bourgeois* and not the clerks that do it ; the former give the Indians every time they pass large presents, which the latter are either afraid or forbidden to give ; the one, in consequence, is regarded by the Indians as a Superior

Being, whom they must respect, the other is a mere tool to them, whom they despise and need not mind.

Notwithstanding all this, our employers expect the same returns from us as they could hope from one of themselves in our places, but they cannot conceive that in our little stations we must act on as high a scale in order to produce the same effect as they.

Here again, Gentlemen of the "Critic Class", you will reprimand my warmth, which, in your opinion, is impertinence, to presume to speak against my employers, but be pleased to recollect that, though I have spoken against some of their actions, yet, I have not against their interests.

Should you itch to show your zeal, good nature, &c. by making remarks, you may have an index made for that purpose at the end of this Journal, for I have taken care that you should not find an inch of clean paper, either at top, bottom or margin of it, (1) not from fear of your arguments, but from the fear that you will not leave me room enough to refute them, of which I by no means despair.

....

Gave credits to the "Whitefish's" son and *gendre* ; they go to their lands, but promise to be back next winter. Gave the Whitefish's son, for nothing, 1 awl, 1 fire steel, 1 gun worm, 3 flints, 1 common belt, 2 horn combs, 1 hook, 1 needle and 34 fathoms of rotten tobacco.. 31st

....

This morning Marlin sent the "English Chiefs" for ammunition, tobacco, combs and vermilion. Sent him two measures ammunition, ½ fath. tobacco, 1 comb and a little vermilion mixed APRIL 2nd. The "clothing" of a chief.

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(1) In fact, the journal is written on foolscap paper, and the sheets of paper, (then scarce in the North-West) are so crammed full that no place is left for a single remark.

with flour. They arrived soon after in great pomp, in all 20 men, the "Little Bird" and his fellows having joined them since the 27th ult. when their number was 14.

After they paid the most of their credits, amounting to 1101 skins, Martin was clothed. Gave him, the "Little Bird," the Little Bird's son, the "Old Whitefish," the English Chief brother, to drink and smoke with their dependants, 1 fath. tobacco and the rest of a keg of mixed rum, out of which all the expenses in this article were taken since last fall to this date. It wanted 5½ inches of being full, and the Montagners believed it did not want ½ an inch, and they seemed quite happy with their good luck. Had these presents been given to these "great men" separately, it would not have appeared half so much, nor have been enough to content them.

Several harangues suitable to the occasion were made on both sides, and the new chief, with his laced coat, with his large keg at his tail, stalked along to his lodge, just an hour after sunset. He made many ceremonies before he accepted of the laced coat; he wished to have a red greatcoat, short breeches and cotton stockings, like the English Chief some years ago at the Old Fort; he would not be a petty chief, he aspired to be raised from nothing to the highest pitch of Glory which a Montagner could possibly be raised to.

In short his head was already so intoxicated by his change of fortune, that he did not know which end of him stood uppermost, whether he stood or sat, walked or flew, was a man or a beast, or a mixture of both.

....

9th. Degraded condition of the women. *Saurarda* arrived and paid 72 skins, beaver credits, between himself and two sons. This Indian brought his daughter, who deserted in the course of the winter from Morin, at Slave Lake, in order to be returned to her husband (Morin). Mr. Porter

wrote me, by Morin's orders, to sell her to the highest bidder and debit Morin for the amount.

Two advantages may be reaped from this affair ; the first is that it will assist to discharge the debts of a man unable to do it by any other means, for he is neither good middleman, foreman, steersman, interpreter nor carpenter ; the second is that it may be the means of thickling some lecherous miser to part with some of his hoard. I therefore kept the woman to be disposed of in the season when the Peace River bucks look out for women, in the month of May..

Joli, Lecompte, St André, Cantaras arrived from the Island, "bag and baggage". 10th.

I offered Morin's wife (to take care of her till the arrival of Mr. Finlay,) first to Etier, then to Dusablon and then to old Marcil, but she refused them all three *tour à tour*, and, to convince them how heartily she hated them all three, she set up her pipes at the bare mention of their names. As soon as they were gone, she said that, as it was her fate to be bound to a *Benchulaigh-Slini*, she should as soon have her former *Benchulaigh-Slini*, Morin, as any other. She has a young *Ojijauke* on board her frigate on its way to this world, but how far advanced in the voyage, I have not enquired.

This, according to the Frenchmen, is Easter Sunday ; my com- 11th.
putation and theirs don't agree, for my Saturday is always their Sunday *fait à coup de pioches*.

Cadien Leblanc's wife having fallen sick in land with the Indians, was brought here the 2nd instant on a *traine*, and, after suffering very much before and since her arrival here, she expired this evening. Dusablon, though the *plus bête*, was ordained priest; by him the dying woman was baptized, and as he delivered the last word of this ceremony, she gave her last gasp.

25

12th. Cadien LeBlanc interred his wife on the *Pointe de Sable*, along side of Labrie. Before her death, she desired that nobody might wear her clothes, and, accordingly, Cadien burnt everything belonging to her.

....

16th. The condition of Fort Chippewean. Blowing very hard all day; Cadien le Blanc had piled up two cords of wood behind Cadien-*gros-nez*'s house, exactly at the corner of the *hangard* which contains the ammunitions, high-wines, &c.; on this pile of wood, *Picoté's* wife had spread some moss which, from sparks that flew from Cadien-*gros-nez*'s chimney, took fire and served as spunk to the wood. Had not *Quebec*'s daughter informed us, the *hangard* would in a short time have been blown up, and, of course, we would have undergone the same fate.

It is to be regretted by every body who winters here, as well as by every one whose interest it is to guard the Company's property, that a powder house was never made at this place. It would be, however, a work of very little expense to the Company and of great use for the preservation of their property and of the lives of those who have it in charge. I cannot help thinking it ridiculous that the Forks, (Peace River,) where there are but a few kegs of powder and few goods, should be arranged in every thing, even to superfluity, while this place, where all the goods and ammunition are stored, is left destitute of a good *hangard*.

Fort McLeod. At Mr. McLeod's fort, the men's houses are better arranged than the *Bourgeois*' houses here. The fort is built with five bastions; courtyards are made everywhere, a spacious garden is made around the fort, a well, a powder house and even a ...... house are made in this garden. Here, we have neither of these conveniences, nor we do ask for any of them, except the two

most necessary, viz: a powder house and *hangard.* We don't presume to find fault with the gentlemen who arranged Peace River Fort so well, but we do, for leaving this Post, of greater consequence, so ill arranged.

The gables of the *hangards* of this place are covered with bark, through which any thief, without hurting himself, may trust either his hands or his head, and take away what best suits his fancy of the goods which they contain. As for the lock of the big *hangard*, a child may open it with his fingers, yet it has been often changed this winter for other locks, which proved not better than the first.

We are every moment in imminent danger of being squeezed to death by the fort pickets, which seem to have long ago been at war with one another. Several "*pagées*" of them are at present flat on the ground, and several more are *in doubt* whether they should fall or not.

Fournier and Ouellette arrived from Slave Lake with the express. (1) Good news from the Slave Country gentlemen. *Trois Pouces* and three or four more Montagners arrived from the Carribou Country, who informed us that Lafrance had been killed last summer by the rascals who deserted with Dusablon's wife. His name is, *l'homme qui regarde le téton.* He has set off for *Fort des pierres*.. .... 17th.

The Montagners, being much afraid, came all into the house to enquire whether we intended to revenge Lafrance's death upon them, or not. In order to keep them hereabout all summer, I 18th. Arbitrary treatment of the Indians

(1) Two expresses were yearly sent through the continent with the corespondance, reports &c. to and from the different posts throughout the North-West. This was the summer express, hurrying down to Grand Portage with the result of the winter work.

The winter express left the farthermost stations of the north about the end of November, passed through the whole country on sledges and snowshoes, and reached Sault Ste Marie, in March.

thought it necessary to assure them that none of those who were here now should suffer the least injury on that account while they behave themselves as they ought, but that if any d—nd rascal of them deserted this summer with any of the Frenchmen's women, he and she would both lose their heads, were we to give 200 skins as a reward to such as would choose to search for them and cut off their head.

They protest against the sale of their women

They desired that we should trade no more women, on any account. I told them that we would do as we thought proper, for it was not their business to prescribe rules to us.................

....

20th. Summary dealings.

The men busy about the canoes.—I am always recommending to the men to avoid quarrelling with the Indians, yet, it is impossible to keep them from doing so.

The old "Whitefish," last fall, sold Galarneau 5 small canoes, which the latter left at the entrance of *Rivière des Rochers*, where *Trois Pouces* encamped, and, this day, I sent Lambert, Cantaras and St André to fetch them here. On their arrival there, the Montagners along with *Trois Pouces* seized upon the canoes and would not allow the Frenchmen to take one of them. The Cree's brother, in particular, threatened to go for his gun to kill the Frenchmen for daring to take away their own property, and they all said it would not be a difficult matter to cut off every one of us, as they are more numerous than we. The Frenchmen, however, took their canoes in spite of them, but not before they (the Frenchmen) had taken the *fourreaux* off their guns to fire, from which they were prevented by *Trois Pouces*, who interfered only to quiet them.

These cowardly villains impose too much upon our good nature. I was, therefore, determined, on receiving these news, to

let them see what they had to fear from our anger, when so often and so unjustly provoked by them.

Five of us armed ourselves to go to the entrance of the *Rivière des Rochers* to enquire into the truth of the Frenchmen's report, and, if true, it was our intention to challenge them to fight bravely, which no Montagner, I ever heard of, ever did.

As we were going out of the house, *Marlin*, who was encamped at the *Pointe de Sable*, having received information of our intention, arrived almost out of breath, and, after much praying, and many promises for his relations' future good conduct towards the Frenchmen, he made us consent to lay down our arms and avoid any hostile attack; for, he said, the Montagners were too great cowards to oppose the Frenchmen bravely, and he knew, if I went at the head of the Frenchmen, it was not *sans dessein*, for we could massacre them as they would do so many carriboux.

D'Oust, who had been sent to the Forks to make a canoe, arrived; he informed us that he left Perrone and Bellegarde in Bustard Island, with 3 loaded canoes, to oppose us at this place. MAY. 22nd. Opposition from the X. Y. Co.

In order to keep them from building a Fort on *Pointe de Sable*, the prettiest spot for that purpose on this side of the lake, Mr. Finlay marked it out for the North-West Company upon receipt of this unexpected piece of news.

This morning, about 11 o'clock, the Potties (1) arrived; they debarked and encamp on the Little Island, near the Fort. Perrone having boasted of having come here only by spite to this Company, and of having traded 40 skins in the Bustard Island previous to his arrival, Mr. Finlay wrote him a letter enquiring 23rd. Violence, intimidation.

(1) Name given in the Athabasca district to the people of the X. Y. Company,—the "Little Company",—by their opponents. It is perhaps a corruption of the word, "les petits", viz: the members of the "Petite Compagnie".

into the truth of this report; but he did not return an answer, pretending he did not understand the letter, because it was written in English.

Mr. Finlay then despatched *Frisé* down a second time, desiring Perrone to meet him about half way, so as to get an explanation of the letter, but he did not understand this neither: therefore, seeing it impossible to chaw Perrone out of his lurking hole, Mr. Finlay and I went down to have a look at this cowardly fellow.

Mr. Finlay, while he explained his letter and the motives of his interview, trembled with anger, but while Perrone denied every charge laid against him in the most abject manner, every limb of him trembled with fear. He had taken Mr. Finlay's letter, the meaning of which was couched in pretty severe terms, to be a challenge, and Mr. Finlay's appearance to mean death...

....

24th. This morning, Mr. Finlay set out for *Lac Lapluie* and Grand Portage. Last night, he gave a large keg to the Montagners, at their chief's request, in order to incite them to behave well during the summer; but as soon as he was out of sight they went to the Potties to take credits. However, partly by persuasion and partly by giving them a few more credits, which I at first refused, I think I kept them from taking many credits. If I have not, I shall, at all events, try and perhaps prevent them paying their credits there. I need not here tell the reason of giving them more credits, it ought to be plain enough without an explanation.

25th. About 12 o'clock last night, Mr. Stuart and Mr. Wentzel went off with three men and a few pieces for the Peace River. The former is to build a fort for the Beaver Indians between

Grand Marais and Lafleur's fort, and the latter is to work with Brousseault at *Grand Marais*.

....

Snowed in the evening.. June, 6th.

Blew a hurricane all this day and began to snow in the even- 7th The climate.
ing. This carried away the *bateaux* from *Pointe aux chiens*, although Laviolette and I secured them in the best manner possible, this morning.

This morning there is a foot of snow on the ground; more 8th.
fell in the course of the day and, in the evening, it froze to such a degree that the *marais* about the fort were covered over with ice, half an inch thick..

This morning, we missed Perrone and three of his men: he 10th. Violence.
was, yesterday, shooting plovers. I suppose, as hunger make old women trot, so it does with old woman Perrone! Sent St Germain after him, but he returned in the night without having seen him, or any vestiges of him. As I was passing their house I found *Kewigiwache's* canoe, which I would have taken for his credits, but it was not worth two skins. I spoke of taking it from them, which made old Parrin, Perrone's successor, speak to me very insolently; this provoked me and induced me to give him a few blows across the lips, which stopped his mouth, threw him on his back and made him bleed.

About twelve o'clock *Kewigiwache* arrived and informed us 11th.
that Perrone debauched him to go as conductor to Cumberland House, for which he made him a chief, and that, going up at the *Trois Petits Portages*, he made several wise reflections on the consequences of this undertaking. returned all the trappings of a chief (which he knew did not belong to a man of his under-

standing,) to the right owner, and bid his Worship adieu, in spite of all his entreaties to persuade him to perform his engagement.

Received *Kewigiwache* according to his merits and heartily forgave him his former bad conduct on account of his last good conduct. We are now let unto Perrone's design, and our future care must be to frustrate it..

12th. *Kewigiwache* went off in order to find the *Bras Cassé*, who is in the Athabasca River with 4 or 5 of his relations, as I am afraid Perrone may again leave unknown to us and debauch a more resolute guide among the Crees. I sent *Bras Cassé* a small keg of rum and ½ fathom of tobacco in order to induce him to go out of his way, to Lac Claire. I look upon it to be of the utmost consequence to keep him from getting a guide, and this can never be effected without incurring some expense to the Company

....

JULY 8th. About 10 o'clock this morning, Messrs Thomson and Wentzel set out in a light canoe for *Grand Marais* ; Mr. Thomson goes to the Rocky Mountain, giving all the advice and assistance he can to the gentlemen acting for this company as he goes along. Mr. Wentzel will remain where he was before, and will have Mr. McLeod to help him and Brousseault. The men had for their voyage to Grand Marais 1½ *taureau*, and the gentlemen so much dried meat as they chose to take.

Laviolette found it blew too hard for setting off for *Lac Clair* at the head of his Montagners ; desired him to inform St Germain of Perrone's illiberal abuse of him. My reason for so doing is to make Perrone and Piché hate one another, as I am afraid the latter, being a little cracked brained and as variable as the wind, may, by dint of presents and frequent interviews, allow himself to be debauched by the former, if not to engage, at least

to allow him some advantages with regard to the trade, and perhaps instruct him in things he ought to be kept from knowing, I do not wish to prey into Perrone's schemes before they are put into execution, it will then be sufficient time to know and to disconcert his most complicated ones.

Laviolette went off for *Lac Claire*; St Germain arrived with two Crees, who brought 16 skins worth fresh meat; gave them a measure rum each, gratis, and the usual ammunition, at departure. St Germain made Perrone *serrer la queue.* 9th.

St Germain told me that one of the Potties, called Lacroix, told him at *Mamaoui* that, had he been in old Parrin's place when I beat him, instead of my giving him a beating as I did to Parrin, he would have given me one. He also boasted that, last winter, he took a horse out of Mr Daniel McKenzie's yard, that no body dared say a word to him. This fellow told myself, sometime ago, that Mr. Campbell was the greatest *vieille* in the North. St Germain had a dispute with him on this account.

Perrone's men came from Mamaoui. I went to Lacroix and challenged him to fight for backbiting myself and the two gentlemen I mentioned yesterday. He refused to fight, and said that St. Germain was an old liar. Soon after St Germain arrived bag and baggage from Mamaoui, there being no use for his staying there as Perrone's men are all here. I informed him of Lacroix calling him a liar. He and I went immediately down to speak to Lacroix, but the fellow was not in the house. As we stood in the hall, Perrone walked out of his room, saluted me and made St. Germain the compliment of inviting him to walk out of his house, at the same time calling him un *vieux insolent.* St Germain immediately obeyed and challenged him to fight any way he chose, and, upon Perrone's refusal, he abused him to the last degree. I went 10th. Provocation

out soon after St Germain in order to go away, but Perrone recalled me, telling me that he did not desire me to go away, because, I suppose, he knew I was not to be trifled with like St Germain, for I had my disk *paré à mon côté*. I returned into the house a second time, as I was bent to pick a quarrel with him.

He complained of the hardship of being abused so much by St Germain ; I answered that it was his own fault in calling that man *une grosse bête* and threatening to burn his eyes with powder, and that it was a shame for him to call all those who came from Scotland, *vachers* He said he did not call all, but a few of them, *vachers*. I desired him to name one here in the North, and told him that the one who served him as a clerk had been a *vacher*, and had the heart of a "*vacher*" since he remained with him.

Here as I began to talk rather loud, Perronne walked into his room abruptly and I came away to write the whole transaction as it happened, in the Journal.

....

La graine arrived with 9 skins of fresh meat ; gave him a piece of tobacco ; he asked for ammunition, but I reminded him of what he had when he came last.

....

18th. "A drinking match" Last night, in the drinking match, the *Roche qui-reluit's* brother proved very troublesome, and we had some difficulty to appease him and some of the other Crees. He told me that as I was too fond of the rum, the young men would forsake me, and I would be ashamed ; I answered that I would not be ashamed, for I was yet young, knew better countries than this, and would leave them. He then said he spoke to no purpose.

Laviolette and Piché watched turn about on the rock. They caught women carrying meat and green skins to *Vieux Parrin*,

which they afterwards traded here. The *Petit Mâle* traded a *brochette d'orignal* dried with *Vieux Parrin*, for rum ; I saw him carrying the meat there : he offered it to me twice. but as we were in sight of their house I refused it and told him to trade it, which he accordingly did and found their rum worse than ours. This was occasioned by our stopping our drinking match for a quarter of an hour.

Drolet arrived from *Grand Marais* ; he met Perronne going up 19th. the Peace River, but he was pitiful, for he had not the least morsel to eat. The Indians still drinking. The *Roche-qui-reluit's* brother asked permission to bring a green orignal skin to *Vieux Parrin* to get strong rum ; he obtained permission, went and came back soon after with the skin, saying that when he asked stong rum of Perrin, the old toad shook his head, and he immediately came off with his skin to me, for I never shook my head. Gave him a little port wine mixed with rum and sugar, to which I added a p———

The Crees went and encamped before the Little Potties who 20th. borrowed fish this day of an old Montagner woman. Gave the *Roche-qui-reluit's* brother the value of 10 skins for nothing, in ammunition and tobacco, and gave each of the other Crees 2 measures am : a flint and a piece of tobacco. They went away exceedingly well pleased and promised not to come to the fort till they had made their meat credits. The *Roche-qui-reluit's* brother had 26 phials of rum at the commencement of and during the match, but the others had not a drop but a phial on arrival.

....

The " Red Knife " brought us 25 pieces of fish from Laviolette. 31st. A cure for Piché.
Gave the prey to them as usual. Piché always complains of the

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(1) Ration of meat fish, pemican or corn *folle avoine*, as the case may be.

hardship of having the mollygripes continually, owing to eating fish, a common food, he says, at this *morné endroit.* He often curses from the bottom of his heart both the place and the food, and, I dare say, the Bourgeois, though I do not hear him. It is with regret he reflects on the fine times he used to have of it during the summer season at Slave Lake, where he was his own master and chose his own meat, while, here, he is neither his own master nor chooses his meat.

Upon duly weighing them, I found that Piché's complaints were just, and resolved upon redressing them. I also considered the hardship for a man of Piché's kidney (not to say his stomach) to have no other dainties than fish to satisfy its cravings with The *Grande Société* to only give him 500 livres yearly, while the Potties would give him one thousand and the same boarding ! From these considerations, I gave Piché 18 lbs. of grease and 20 lbs. of pounded meat, to eat by way of desert after his fish and by way of cure for the mollygripes. Who knows, but the Company may gain this small donation back again with interest, for it is well known that the Frenchmen are more active in their employers cause with a full belly than an empty one. To keep the Frenchmen in good humour their chops, now and then, must be greased.

After Piché got the pounded meat and grease, he proved more interested than he had done since his arrival from Slave Lake. He is encamped a little further than a gun shot from Perrone's house. This night is very dark, yet his sight improved so much that he perceived a Montagner debarking at the Little Island before Perronne's house, though he assured me often that it was impossible for him to have seen Perrone going off, although the night was much brighter than it is now.

He ran immediately after the Montagner, who proved to be that d......d thief the English Chief's brother. He accosted him

in Cree, and the Montagner, on this account, taking him one for of Perrone's lackeys, told him that his son was already arrived in their home, and that he left his wife with meat and skins for them at *Pointe aux chiens*. Piché then thought proper to discover himself in speaking in Montagner; he made the old fellow and his son come here by offering to flog them, and as soon as they set out for this post, Piché, in their canoe, went down to the *Pointe* and brought up 6 skins of dried meat and 16 skins of beaver.

As he was arriving at the *Pointe* he perceived one of the Potties sneaking along; he told him that if he touched any thing belonging to the Indians he would give him a sound beating for his pains; the fellow got frightened and returned.

It is very likely that if I had not understood Piché's complaints and had given him nothing, he would not have seen the Montagner going to Perrone!

This evening, Sourarda and his son arrived from *Lac Clair*. August 2nd.
They are both almost naked and half starved, having thrown away every thing belonging to them, on account of the death of one of their best hunters, the *Tête de Lièvre's gendre*, who was killed last month by a buffaloe. The *Tête de Lièvre* has gone like a madman in the Athabaska River, with Marlin taking care of him as he wants to destroy himself. All the other Montagners came here, so that Mr. Porter is alone at *Lac Clair*.

Gave *Sourarda* a little dried meat, half spoiled, which I kept for the dogs. I did this to get rid of him, for he was since his arrival teasing me for ammunition, &c. A band of women who went to gather berries arrived this evening, and say they found none; so we will eat no berries this summer, and the Company's *Corasse* (?) shall not suffer by our extravagance that way.

....

4th. Laviolette has been sending daily from Mamaoui an average of 15 to 20 pieces of fish. This morning, he and the Red Knife Indian arrived, bag and baggage. At the same time the *Bœuf debout* arrived from the *Bras cassé*, and several Montagners arrived from *Lac Clair*. Dubois' comrade, a Montagner, pulled his gun from the *Bœuf debout* because, he said, the Crees threatened to kill the Montagners, but we made the Montagner return his gun to the Cree, and the latter set off immediately with ½ fathom of tobacco for the *Bras cassé*.

Drinking match quarrel.

I refused to send him ammunition as he has only meat; I did not chose to fire, because it is a ceremony never used in summer at this place, and I do not wish to be the first to introduce it. Soon after the Crees arrived, in all 7 men, besides women and children. Dubois' comrade continued insulting and braving them as they came along from the Potties fort. Got all their baggage put into the *hangard* and their lodges made in the fort so as to have less trouble during the drinking match. Gave them a large keg for 86 skins of provisions, and 18 meas: am: between them, for nothing.

The Montagners, to the number of 12, entered the house, where they harangued the Crees about their intention of killing Montagners, for near an hour, during which time none spoke to them but Drolet, the most cowardly of them all. At last, the *Bras cassé* spoke to this purpose.

" Since I was a young man I have been always hereabout and " among the Montagners, but I never killed nor offered to kill a " Montagner, nor do I mean to do it, now that I am an old man, " if the Montagners leave me and my young men alone, but " should the Montagners wish to cut the Crees, the Crees will " cut the Montagners, for the one are not more iron proof than " the other. But you, Montagners, appear ridiculous in our eyes, " you continually babble to no purpose, renoting the same stu-

" pid stories over and over again, to the mortification of all your " hearers, and if ever your mouth is stopped, it is only by the " stem of a calumet. Would you do more and talk less than " you do, it would be much more useful for yourselves and less " troublesome to others.

The Montagner admitted the justice of all what *Bras cassé* said, and the *Bras cassé* invited them to drink with him. Duboi's comrade growing very drunk began to make the man (1) in the fort, and we were obliged to turn him out to let the others see how they would be treated should they behave in the same manner........ ....

....

St Cyr brought 31 pieces of fish. This evening, before sunset the heavens all of a sudden, became so overcast with clouds, or rather smoke, that it appeared like midnight, and the air so impregnated with a sulphurous smell that we found it more agreable to remain in the houses than out of doors. The night continued so dark that nothing could be distinguished any more than in a subterraneous vault, and the Indians killed several ducks with a flambeau, owing to the darkness of the night. As we are not philosophers enough to attribute any other cause to this sudden transition from light to darkness, and from a pure to a sulphurous air, we think it may be occasioned by the irruption of some volcanos in the neighbourhood of this place, as the Indians inform us that there are several hereabouts. 29th. *La grande noirceur.*

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(1) *Faire l'homme,*

Mr JAMES McKENZIE

THE KING'S POSTS

AND

JOURNAL OF A CANOE JAUNT

THROUGH THE

KING'S DOMAINS

1808

THE SAGUENAY AND THE LABRADOR COAST

26

I

The north shore of the Lower St Lawrence.—The Moravian Company.—The country on the sea shore.—The interior of Labrador; animals and seasons.—Anticosti.

II

The Natives of the King's Posts.—Their complete ignorance about their origin.—Father Labrosse; his theory.—The *Nasquapis*, or Indians of the interior; their appearance, character and religion.—The "Feast of the Bear Cub", &c.—Women; courtship. —Death ceremonies.—Efforts made to christianize the Natives. —An explanation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

III

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THE JOURNAL

I

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II

Portneuf.—The seal bank.—Post of St Jérémie.—*Manicouagan.* —Godbout.—The Seven Islands.—Mingan.—*Ile aux Perroquets.*—*Napioshibou.—Masquaro.—Natasquam*; salmon fisheries.

JAMES McKENZIE

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE KING'S POSTS, THE LABRADOR COAST AND THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI, BY AN INDIAN TRADER, RESIDING THERE SEVERAL YEARS ; WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE NATIVES AND THE JOURNAL OF A CANOE TRIP THROUGH THOSE COUNTRIES, BY THE SAME. (1)

I

The North Shore of the Lower St. Lawrence.—The Moravian Company.—The country on the sea Shore.—The interior of Labrador ; animals and climate.—Anticosti.

If rocks form what is commonly understood by " an iron bound shore ", the north of the River St. Lawrence, from the lower end of the Island of Orleans, may be truly so called, as nothing scarcely is to be seen for hundreds of leagues but mountains, *caps* and cliffs in various shapes and figures, some of which are covered chiefly with spruce, others present their bald pates, as if deprived of their covering by the unmerciful hand of Time.

Passing *Cap Tourmente*, which is five leagues in length, the country, for twenty five leagues more, has undergone some degree of cultivation, being inhabited by Canadians, and divided into four parishes. The Little River, Bay St. Paul, *Les Eboule-*

(1) The North-West Company were then, since several years, the lessees of the King's Posts.

ments and Murray Bay. The last of those parishes belonged to the King's Domains, which it furnished with beef and butter, till 1762, when General Murray, whose name it now bears, granted it to Major Nairn and Lieut. Fraser, restricting them, however, from trading with the Indians.

At present, the King's Domains extend along the coast, north-east, the distance of seventy six leagues, from the Black River, five leagues below Murray Bay, to the River Cormorant, nine leagues beyond the Seven Islands, and up the river Saguenay, in a westerly direction, the length of two hundred leagues to Lake Mistassini, reckoned half way between Hudson's Bay and the St Lawrence.

The seigniory of Mingan, commencing at the Cormorants, stretches along this rugged coast the distance of ninety leagues to the Vermilion River, which falls into the Gulf at the lower end of the Island of Anticosti.

The Island of Anticosti is fifty leagues in length, from East to West and ten in the broadest part. This seigniory, as well as that of Mingan, were granted by the French to two gentlemen of the name of Mingan and Anticosti for services rendered in war. (1) Their descendents possessing no commercial spirit, at the conquest of Canada, disposed of them to some of the first English settlers for a mere song.

The Labrador coast, beyond those seigniories, has been left unappropriated, and is a common to which all nations at peace with England may resort, unmolested, for furs, oil, codfish and salmon.

Lyburner and Crawford's seal fisheries, occupying about forty five leagues, come next, after which the coast is inhabited by Esquimaux and a mixture of English, Irish and Canadians, com-

(1) Anticosti and Mingan Islands were conceded, in 1697 and 1680, to the Sieur de Joliette in recognition of services rendered to his country by his voyages in the West.

monly called " planters ", who trade with the Eskimaux and carry on salmon and cod fisheries along the Straits of Belisle, as far as Great Esquimaux Bay.

The last settlement of which we have any knowledge, on this side of Hudsons Bay, was formed some years ago, eighty leagues farther, by a party of Dutch, who style themselves the " Moravian Company ". These people pretend to have a grant from the King of forty leagues of this coast. They keep aloof from every other traders at their factory, where they have erected some elegant buildings and have a preacher of the Gospel ; they exchange their commodities with the Esquimaux for oil, bears, martens, foxes. The distance of this settlement from Quebec is reckoned five hundred leagnes.

The country on the sea shore.

The country of which I have been drawing the limits is perhaps the part the least favored by nature, in point of climate and soil, of the inhabited Globe. Men placed here have no other resource but to prey upon the inferior animals around him, for the soil, composed of moss, sand and rock, is too sterile, and the climate too cold to produce a substitute for satisfying the cravings of hunger ; often does the poor miserable sinner retire to his hard cold bed without a supper, and leave it next morning without a prospect of procuring for himself and family a breakfast or a dinner.

Very few sights, I believe, can be more distressing to the feelings of humanity than a Labrador savage, surrounded by his wife and five or six small children, half famished with cold and hunger, in a hole dug out of the snow, and screened from the inclemency of the weather with the branches of trees. Their whole furniture is a kettle, hung over the fire, not for the purpose of cooking victuals, but melting snow.

For about fifty leagues from the shore the country is mountainous, then it becomes level and mossy, and continues so till within a few leagues of the Hudson Bay coast, where it resumes its former rough, elevated appearance.

Animals. In the lakes and rivers, which are numerous and extensive, are found : trout, whitefish, doré, pike, *carpe*, and salmon ; in the woody regions, beavers and every other animal of the fur kind are met with, if not in greater numbers, at least clothed with the richest furs which North America possesses. Carriboux are seen some years browzing in great herds on the plains and hills. The Labrador fishermen have often been known to shoot many of them from their windows. The moose deer also is an inhabitant of this country, but only in small numbers, about the River Saguenay, where the soil is rich, woody, and marshy. As porcupines, hares and partridges are found in almost every country, I need hardly say they are met with here, and, when every other resource fails, these alone afford a scanty meal to prolong the lives of the poor Indians.

In the spring and fall, the coast swarms with wild fowls, and the sea with fish, in such variety as would require the knowledge and skill of the naturalist to classify and describe, and these are the only seasons in the year in which life is enjoyed, and does not become a burden to the inhabitants of this unhallowed coast.

Climate. The winter is long and severe ; one would need to have blood like brandy, the skin of brass and the eyes of glass, not to suffer from the rigours of a Labrador winter. In the summer, the frequent fogs render the air damp, and the constant breezes from the immense fields of ice floating in the Gulf keep the land pleasantly cool, and make any alteration in the winter dress almost unnecessary.

The soil in the Island of Anticosti is said to be, in some parts, **Anticosti.** very fertile, but the fogs and cold, damp atmosphere which envelop this island during the summer counteract the effects of the sun, so that vegetation is slow, and wheat does not grow to maturity.

Some fine wood, among which white and red pine, grows upon it, There are some lakes and rivers abounding in salmon and trout ; bears, martens and foxes are numerous. A few beavers were left on this island some years ago which multiplied very rapidly, but the Indians from Mingan having but seven leagues to cross, soon destroyed this thriving colony. Seals are so numerous that the shores of Anticosti seem to be their native place. The proprietors, however, like the dog in manger, neither hunt those animals themselves, nor allow others to do it.

Two solitary Canadians are the sole human inhabitants of this Island. They are settled with their families on the western end, and raise a sufficiency on their farms *pour faire la soupe.*

I have been told that hemp grows here. Good harbours are scarce about Anticosti, which no ship approaches in stormy weather with impunity, and without running great risk of being totally wrecked upon its hidden rocks and shoals.

II

The Natives of the King's Posts.—Their complete ignorance about their origin.—Father Labrosse : his theory.—The *Nasquapis*, or Indians of the interior : their appearance, character and religion.—The " Feast of the Bear Cub, " &c.—Women ; courtship.—Death ceremonies.—Efforts made to christianize the Natives—An explanation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

The Natives ; their origin. I have now come to that part of my narrative in which, as a traveller, I conceive it my duty to give you some account of the Natives of the country I have been describing, and to introduce you, with all respect and due decorum, to our princes and princesses of ragged fame.

In the course of my peregrinations, the Natives of the Kings Posts are the only tribes of savages I found who live in such perfect ignorance and indifference about their origin as to have no traditional account whatever handed down to them to assist in clearing up the rubbish from this obscure point.

I have questioned many of the most knowing among them upon this important subject, but a vacant stare conveyed all the answer I could obtain to my enquiry, save from one old man at Mingan, who said that all he knew, or cared to know concerning his forefathers' descent, was that he had heard they came from *Masquaro*, or Bear's Tail, the last post on the Mingan seigniory.

This sage, however, unites in his own person a civil and ecclesiastical employ, being chief of Mingan and a member of

the Church. His long and solemn visage is adorned with one optic only, having lost the other, not, as it might be presumed, in gazing on the heavenly bodies, nor, like King Philip of old, in battle, by the arrow of his enemy, (for one eyed Joseph is equally averse to study and war,) but in grappling with the sweet partner of his bed, at a moment when the fumes of strong liquor had driven his small stock of reason from its seat, in the upper story, and she, with a dexterity peculiar to her sex in the use of her defensive weapons, soon scratched the eye from poor Joseph's phiz.

But, to return to the main object, since the Indians themselves can furnish us with no documents to trace their origin, we are left to wonder in the unlimited wilderness of conjecture, and probably may get nearer the truth by comparing the features, customs and language of the different nations and tribes together, than by one of their own fabulous stories. My part of the task is to transmit you as faithful a sketch as possible of the original before me, by the resemblance of which to other portraits of the same kind in your possession, you may likely discover whether they be descendants of Sem, Cham or Japhet, or of a dog, like the Chipewyans of Athabaska.

Père Labrosse, a learned Jesuit, maintained that when Solomon formed the design of building the famous temple of Jerusalem, he despatched a vessel to every known part of the globe for artists and materials. One of those vessels was driven by a storm on the coast of this vast continent, and the crew, unable, from their ignorance of navigation, to trace their way back, landed and were its first inhabitants. He observed a similarity in the looks, disposition, manner of life and religious rites of the Indians to those of the Israëlites, who were swarthy, so are the Indians ; they were ungrateful, so are the Indians ; they

Father Labrosse.

were rebellious and idolators, so are the Indians ; they offered sacrifices to the Supreme Being, so do the Indians ; they wandered about in tents, so do the Indians, &c.

Father Labrosse lived twenty-five years as missionary in the King's Post, and there are now twenty years since the good man took his flight for the world of spirits. He had some chirurgical skill which saved the life, at one time, of his servant maid, who had been making too free with the blacksmith of Tadousac. He had also some poetical talents, and composed a song upon his favorite dog, which began thus :

Jupiter par la vieillesse
N'a plus de poil aux fesses.

The Indians of the King's Post and Labrador are Crees, originally from Hudson's Bay, and differ but little in their dress, manners and language from the *Têtes de Boule* of the River St Maurice and Temiscamingue. They are divided into two tribes the *Nascapees*, or inland Indians and the Montagners, or shore Indians.

The *Nascapis.*

The Nascapees may still be regarded as the primitive inhabitants of the coast, whose ancient habits, usages and absurdities they, to this day, retain in all their savage purity.

They lead a wandering life through the bare, flat parts of the country, subsist chiefly upon the flesh, and clothe themselves with the skin of the carribou, which they catch in snares or shoot with the bow and arrow, an exercise in which they are very expert. They resort with their bear, martin, fox, and carribou skins once a year, either to Hudson's Bay, Great Esquimaux Bay, or the King's Post, to exchange them for the most necessary articles, such as axes, knives, guns, ammunition, &c. Their number is about five hundred souls, and there are some among them

who have grown old without having ever seen an European, and who still form their utensils out of bones and stone.

The Nascapees are generally above the middle size, slender, and long shanked, their cheeks jutting out remarkably make the contour of the face incline to the oval. The eyes are black, the nose rather flat, mouth capacious, lips thick, the teeth white, the hair rough and black, and the complexion, of a beautiful frog colour, gives a last touch to this antic figure.

The men dress in a capot, *brayet* and leggins of carribou skin, prepared in the hair, which they wear, at all seasons, next to skin; the outside is painted in various fantastic figures of different colours which they extract from wood and herbs, and the shoulders decorated with *épaulettes* made of beads, porcupine and goose quills. They carry the hair behind the head, around which—leaving the crown bare,—they wear a strap of cloth or beads fastened close behind and dangling to the hips. But, when they wish to look fierce, the ordinary covering for the head is the skin of the bear's head in the state it was worn by the shaggy owner. Thus accoutered, with the addition of his bow and quiver, his stone axe and bow knife, a Nascapee possesses no small degree of national pride and self importance. **Their dress and appearance.**

The dress of the women consists of a conical cap, a robe with detached sleeves, which is belted around the waist and hangs from the shoulder to half the leg, leggins, and shoes of carribou skin. They bundle the hair on each side of the head. Both sexes tatoo their cheeks and grease their faces; the men pluck their beard from the root.

These people, though naturally timid, are treacherous, when provoked. Like most savages, they are indolent, till want spurs them to action. They are great thieves, but trusty when property is left in their charge, and they hold a liar in detesta- **Character.**

tion. Their having no intercourse with Europeans prevents them from adopting any of their vices, and their desire for spirituous liquors is among the weakest of their passions. But they are libidinous and accused of sodomy.

Religion. They believe in a "Great Spirit" who made the earth and the Nascapees, and in an inferior deity, who made the different kinds of wild animals, and distributed them among the Indians in proportion to their merits and the fervency of their prayers. This God is, therefore, adored whenever the belly feels concerned. He is not longer than their little finger, is dressed in white and called *Ka-wab-api-shit*, or the White Spirit.

They believe also in an evil spirit, who is a busy meddling body, forever planning mischief to counteract the good works of *Ka-wab-api-shit*, on which account they always implore him to have mercy on them, and, since he has not the power, any more than the will, to do them good, at least to do them no harm.

As for the "Great Being", they never worship him, because, being all goodness, he has not the power, and it would be against his nature, to do them any mischief, and will do, them all the good he can without being teazed into it. When they die, they think they are to go to a place where they will enjoy all the sensual pleasures of this life.

Conjurors. Next to their gods, the Nascapees hold in the highest veneration their conjurors, who act in the double capacity of priest and physician, and not only intercede for them with the Good and Bad Spirit but, likewise, restore health to their sick. When one of these enters the place of worship prepared for his reception, with a rattle in his hand and a stick across in his mouth, the most silent awe reigns around him, and the most sanguine expectations are formed by the beholders of the success of the

magicians skill in petitioning the God of animals and in scaring the Devil.

He is no sooner seated in his " temple," than the country resounds with the noise of his rattles and singing, which is composed of a repetition of " *Ya-tat-shis shiku-unie kui, Ya-tat-" shis she ku unie kui—Ki-ka-ka-ui shi shi ka ma ni, ki ka ka ui " she ka ma ni..*—Great master of animals among the clouds bless " us, and let us continue to make as good a hunt as usual."

After he has worked himself into convulsions by his contorsions and howlings till rivulets of perspiration trickle from his naked body, he cries in a sort of ecstacy, " He comes — He " comes,—I see him, I see him,—he is dressed very fine." Then the spell is over, the charm complete, and the good doctor, after recovering his exhausted spirits, relates to the anxious bystanders his conversation with *Ka-wab-api-shit*, what success may be expected in the chase, and how he has concluded a treaty of peace with their common enemy, the Devil.

In his medical capacity, this man administers no other medecine to effect a cure than singing and blowing on the part affected and sucking it, the intention of which is to counteract the machinations of their enemies,who, through their conjurors and at the instigation of the Devil, they believe, cause every misfortune which may befall them, such as famine, sickness and death.

This man never travels without his bag, which he carries about with much reverential awe, as it contains all the apparatus of his art and, among the rest, a cub bear's skin painted, a bark dish and some other trash, to which he attaches superstitious notions, and which he dedicates to *Ka-wab-api-shit*.

The Feast of the Bear Cub.

Of all animals, the bear is regarded with the greatest reverence and respect among the Nascapees. The skin of the first cub they

kill in the hunting season being striped entire from the carcass, is stuffed with hay, and the head and paws decorated with beads, quills and vermilion. The blood, entrails and flesh are next cooked, and all the people of the horde are invited to partake of it in honour of *Kawabapishit*, to whose paternal bounty they owe the luscious meal. In the centre of the feast the skinny deity is placed, grinning while the drum beats, and the guests devour the flesh in silence. The bones being torn from the flesh, or rather the flesh from the bones, they are, with much ceremony, suspended to a *Mai* (1), which has been previously erected for that purpose.

Should a dog, amid all this religious mummery, be sacrilegious enough to pass any of the fat or flesh between his unhallowed jaws, in order to appease the wrath of the angry deity, the vile animal is instantly slaughtered, the flesh is devoured and each guest must eat a teaspoonful of his excrements, and then the bones are hung to a tree.

Hunting feasts

As the fall of the leaves is the beginning of the hunting season, they meet at a sumptuous feast so as to bid each other adieu, communicate what they mean to do,&c. They have another feast in the spring, in order to congratulate one another on their different successes and exploits in the chase, on which occasions their tents, which are generally made small and in the shape of a sugar loaf for the accommodation of a family or two, are now made capacious enough to contain the people of a whole tribe, and in the form of the roof of a house placed on the ground.

In this spacious hall those good folks eat and drink, caper and grunt, until tired, but what affords the greatest fund of merriment and loud peals of laughter is the unexpected, though not unwelcome, report from a *leather gun*, and the wit of the comp-

(1) *Arbre de Mai.* Flag pole.

any is displayed in the different construction put upon the purport of the messenger's visit.

They all dance together, the women on one side and the men on the other side of the wigwam, while the greatest man beats the drum and sings, to which they keep time, a very easy matter, as the musician keeps continually repeating the same note, the dancers hopping the same step and grunting at every jerk like so many hungry pigs.

An unmaried woman must never touch a Nascapee's gun, this would offend the god of animals and render the gun useless. When a girl comes to the age of puberty, her mother, ever careful of the daughters moral character, erects a hut for her, where she must remain excluded from the other sex for three days, her face besmeared with grease, and a cap on her head, to which are suspended (over the eyes,) strings of beads or leather to prevent her from seeing a man during this first merry period of her existence. The term of her seclusion being over, she returns among her friends, but continues, till married, to eat out of the same bark dish which she used during her confinement, and if any other person, by chance or otherwise, should have the misfortune to touch it, this would be considered as the prelude to some very great calamity, to the whole nation. The women

In their courtship, the young men throw small sticks at the objects of their choice: should the latter return the compliment, it is a favorable reception, if not, it is a tacit hint to search their fortune elsewhere. It is also a common method for the young man to leave his blanket in the father of his beloved's tent. If the match be disapproved of, he finds on his return the blanket spread outside of the door, but if it is agreable to all parties, he finds the blanket spread near his bride and the next and last scene to be acted is to consummate the nuptials. Marriage.

27

A Nascapee will take as many wives as he can maintain, and so far from discovering any symptoms of jealousy for the unequal distribution of favors, those females call one another by the kind name of sisters. It is perfectly understood and agreed between both sexes that the women were designed by the Great Spirit to drudge, and the men, for the noble exercise of providing for their families by means of their bows and arrows.

Death ceremonies

As soon as a Nascapee dies, the survivors set up the jowl, fire a shot to frighten away the evil spirit which killed him, and light torches, even in day light, around the corpse, which is soon after interred with his utensils and wearing apparel, a necessary precaution, they think, to facilitate his journey to that country whence no traveller ever returns. The absent relatives are acquainted with this melancholy event by blackening the bark of a tree and leaving the branches bent over it like the weeping willow. Every relation who passes, were it twenty years afterwards, strews the grave with green boughs as a mark of respect for the memory of his departed friend. They mourn by wearing the hair loose, and fastening the strings of the deceased's shoes round their wrist.

They reckon time by moons and nights, and they amuse themselves by draughts and the game of the *Crosse.*

Travelling.

Their snow-shoes are made nearly in the shape of a guitar. Those who inhabit the plain, flat part of the country make them turned up at both ends and laced only in the middle. They make their canoes like the Crees of Athabasca, and so they do their sledges, which are hauled by dogs and by themselves when those animals are scarce. In summer, they make the dogs lug along their filthy goods across their back in such huge heaps that, at a little distance off, neither the head, paws or tail are

discernible, so that those wretched brutes may be mistaken for moving hillocks.

In common with the rest of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, the Nascapees are in all their habits of body filthy and nasty in the extreme. Their garments swarm with vermin, which they eat as fast as they can catch.

Free from their infancy, however, from restraint, and forced, early, to think and act for themselves, they acquire much cunning and sagacity in whatever may concern their own manner of life, and if we can find among them none who can please the eye by their cleanliness, yet, we meet with some who are endowed with sufficient natural sense to puzzle the *savant*.

Attempts have been made by missionaries to convert such as have come within their reach, but it his hard to teach tricks to an old dog, and no less so is it to convince a Nascapee that our notions of religion are preferable to his own, which have been taught him by his parents, and instilled into him by long habits. However absurd these may appear to us, it is certain ours seem no less so to them. There are on the coast Nascapees who have not only their wives' daughters, but even their own daughters, for wives. **Missionaries.**

Some years ego, a priest wishing to explain to one of those Indians the principles of religion, among other important tenets, told him that in God there where three different persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy-Ghost, and, yet, that these three different Persons were in reality the same and made but one. The Indian, struck with this seeming paradox, begged the Reverend Father to explain his meaning more clearly, for he could not conceive how the son could be as old as the father. The priest, taken off his guard by the unexpected objection, said it **The *Nasquapi* and the "Holy Trinity."**

it was a mystery in his religion which he was bound to believe without thoroughly understanding it. "Well," said the man of Nature, "since you have not sense enough to explain the doct-"rine you advance, I shall offer you my opinion on it," on which, folding the skirt of his *capot* in three, he said: "Look "*Patriache*"—so they call the priest—"these three folds of ca-"ribou are different in number but the same in size, quality "and age, yet, you see," pulling them asunder, "they make in reality but one."

III

The "Montagners," or Shore Indians; their contact with the whites.—Their persons, habits and dress.—Civilities.—Distribution of rum and bread on festive days.—Women—Indifference to sufferings and death.—Diseases.—Language and degree of instruction.—Vocabulary.

The Montagners, or Shore Indians, are about four hundred in number. They are Christians, and a priest passes amongst them once every summer in order to christen, marry, confess, &c. for which the lessees allow him a salary of fifty guineas and his travelling expenses; but they have as yet benefited very little by his precept and good example, for in them we find concentrated all the vices of the whites and Nascapees, without one of their virtuous qualities. Indolence, ingratitude, malice, stubbornness and a propensity to drinking, stealing, lying and trickery. In a word, let us view them on whatever side, or through which ever mediums we please, we shall find them neither one thing nor the other, neither Nascapees nor whites, but, like the mule between the horse and the ass, a spurious breed between both, and a melancholy instance of the influence of European manners upon the morals of the wild inhabitants of the woods. **Effect of their intercourse with the whites.**

This heterogenous and most wretched species of the human race passes the summer along the coast, either to steal or to trade a bottle of their only god, rum, and they spend the winter in a half starved state between the sea shore and the interior, pil- **Their persons habits and dress.**

laging wrecks or any thing else which the waves cast in their way, and killing a few stragling beavers, martens or otters.

Being enervated by their slothful habits, too free of indulgence in the use of spirituous liquors and in debaucheries of every kind, their minds are stupid, their persons diminutive, and their constitutions weak. The features of most of them resemble those of Europeans, but on sundays and holidays, the only times they undergo a thorough scrubbing and the real colour of their skin is visible, their faces look as it they had jaundice.

The men imitate the Canadians in their dress, and tie their black bristly hair in thick greasy *queues* behind their head.

The only difference between a Nascapee and a Montagner woman's dress is that the former dresses in leather and the latter in cloth, with the addition of a shawl tied with an elegant knot to conceal her tempting beauties from the roguish eye. The less prudish matron, when suckling her hungry child, is less fearful of public gaze ; an unprepossessing sight, at best.

Their caps, in the shape of a priest's mitre, are made of red and blue second cloth, the seams and rim of which are ornamented with beads and ribands, fancifully put on. Their robes, made of red or blue cloth and with detached sleeves, hang from the shoulder to the ankle and are wrapped tight around the waist by a belt of the same cloth but of different colour, so that their shapes are plainly seen..

Their sleeves are made of calico ; they suspend crosses with ribands to their neck, and their stockings are of scarlet cloth, trimmed with beads and riband, which, if we add their matted hair in oily clubs over the ears, makes a truly grotesque figure.

Neither men nor women wear a blanket over their shoulders like our Indians. In cold weather, the former double their ordinary clothes, and the latter fasten a petticoat *à la française*

round their loins, and stuff the upper part of their robes with rags and clouts till they have no better shape than an Egyptian mummy.

The manner of salutation among them is a shake of the hand, with a buss on the middle and another on each side of the mouth. The women give the *bourgeois* their hand, accompanied with a certain jerk of the body like that caused by an electric shock. The men present him some seal skins and furs ; in return for such marks of affection and civility, more than the value in rum is expected, and always punctually paid. **Civilities.**

Every Montagner who marries is entitled, from an ancient usage, to a loaf of bread and a bottle of rum, immediately after the ceremony has taken place. A bottle of rum, is always given also gratis for every hhd : of oil they trade at the posts. On Sunday, bread and rum are distributed among them as a reward for going to church. It is likewise customary to entertain them with bread, pork, rum and tobacco on every great *Fête* which happens in the course of the year, which causes them to loiter about the posts, or travel many leagues in the depth of winter, for the sake of a belly full. **The bottle of rum and the loaf of bread.**

But the grandest feast of all is given to them, once a year, after the return with their spring hunt. Nothing is spared on this occasion to complete those poor people's happiness for a couple of days, and rum is liberally bestowed.......................... **The "spring hunt feasti"**

To this banquet the chief pays the clerk and men of the post the compliment of an invitation. The tent is pitched like that of the Nascapees on such occasions. The men and women sit and dance on opposite sides, the "Great Man" sings and beats the drum, which, when he feels tired, he hands to the next in rank and quality, and every one of the company utters a groan by way of thanks for the favor conferred on them.

All this time, the Clerk, or *Hogima*, is treated with all possible civility and respect, being seated in the centre of the tent, on a chair, with a table covered with the choicest viands *nicely* cooked before him, and the chief on his right doing the honors of the table with Adam's knives and forks, while the pipe and the bottle pass briskly around the circle, and convivial conversation begins to be pretty clamorous.

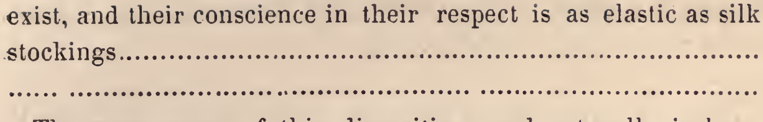
As soon as decency will permit, and the Canadian chief has regaled all his senses with the scene before him, he retires, honored by a volley of fire arms and the thanks of the company, expressed by a heavy groan all round.

....

Marriages. Immediately after the priest has performed the marriage ceremony at the altar, the married couple repair, still holding each other by the hand, to the person in charge of the post, on whose lips each bestows three smacks, in return for which he gives them a bottle of rum and a loaf of bread. With this they make merry among their friends, and as soon as the fumes of the liquor have heated their brain and armed them with courage, they harass him out of his five senses for more, to celebrate this memorable day.

This day of merriment and rejoicing being over, and this lovely pair launched into the tempestuous ocean of married life, the husband attends to the important duties of hunting, and the wife to her domestic affairs. Much harmony reigns between them till a false step of hers alarms his delicate sentiments of honour, and drives him for redress into the arms of another. Thus, frequently, hymen's knot is for ever dissolved.

The women. The ladies of His Majesty's Posts, whether married or unmarried, young or old, are, it must be confessed, much inclined to gaiety. Their ideas of chastity are so confined as scarcely to



exist, and their conscience in their respect is as elastic as silk stockings..

....

The men, aware of this disposition, and naturally jealous, watch them very closely, particularly in drinking frolics. Though fond of rum to an uncommon excess, some of them keep sober to guard the motions of their wives and daughters, but, at the same time, they carry on intrigues of their own with those of their neighbours, for they, no more than their dear ribs, are very punctual in observing the tenth commandment.

....

Indifference to sufferings and death.

The Montagner shows an unnatural indifference for the loss of those who ought to be most dear to them, The parent loses his child, the child loses his parent, without regret or a tear, except when rum is so plentiful within as to stream from their eyes. This must not be ascribed to thinking heads but to unfeeling hearts and to the state of insensibility into which they are plunged by the too immoderate use of spirituous liquors, which appear to have the same benumbing effects upon their faculties which opium has upon those of the Orientals.

To do them justice, however, they are equally indifferent under personal sufferings, owing, perhaps, to the like cause and to their being insensible of danger, for the rueful countenance of a doctor never increases their apprehension, and they leave this life with as little struggle as they come into it

They carry their dead to be interred in consecrated ground at the expense of the Bourgeois, and the priest, when he passes, performs the funeral service. Those who die at a distance and without relations to perform the last duty more decently are, the moment they expire, huddled into a hole.

They bestow presents of furs annually upon the Church, the quantity and quality of which are, like the sincerity of the sailor's

prayers in a storm, in proportion to the degree of danger they are in from famine, sickness or death.

Diseases. Their organs are so constructed as to absorb every pestilentiel disease floating in the air, or communicated to them by the crews of wrecks and the inhabitants of the adjacent parishes. In 1802, the small pox made a great havoc among them, and so did the measles, in 1810. The venereal disorder gains ground fast, and fevers are common. The diseases occasioned by their own filthy and exposed mode of living are; colds, jaundice, rhumatisme, consumption, ulcers and a loathsome disorder which swells them like bladders and causes nauseous eruptions to grow on the skin, which makes them look scaly; they seem as snugly lodged within this coat of mail as a trutle within its shell.

Language and degree of instruction. The most of them speak, or rather murder, the French language, and read, write and correspond in their own. They form their letters after print, make their pens of wood and their ink of the bark of the willow, boiled into a gluey consistence with a black freestone found along the shore. They excel in singing hymns, and such as sing in church understand the notes which enable them to sing correctly. The priests have translated no other books into their language than the catechism and the common prayer book, which countain all the learning of these half formed men.

Their weapons and their mode of hunting. Their tents, snowshoes, sledges and canoes are made like those of the Nascapees; they also amuse themselves and reckon their time in the same manner. The bow and arrow appear to be out of use among them; some of them are found to be good shots, but an incredible quantity of ammunition is squandered by them in the year upon wild fowls and seals.

They shoot the latter out of their canoes in the months of December, January, March, June and July. As they do not understand trenching the beaver lodges in winter, they either shoot them or catch them in steel traps every fall and spring.

This chief article of trade is provisions ; the lessees' stores support them for nine months out of the twelve, and in spite of all the precautions that can be taken to prevent their starving, they suffer a great deal from hunger every winter, some even die before they can reach the post.

Their aversion for fish.

Though codfish, salmon, trout, &c. are plentiful during the summer season, it is very singular that these Indians will sooner want than fish. When they have a sore throat they fancy a fish is the cause of it, and, to get rid of it, they fasten a strip of net round their necks.

Il fait noir.

When they have nothing to eat, they say " *Il fait noir;* " but in the spring of the year, when they swallow in plenty of wild fowls and no longer stand in need of the assistance of the Company's stores, they kick up their heels and fire a broadside for the *Bourgeois*, one of the Clerk and another for the *engagés*.

VOCABULARY of the language spoken by the Nascapees and Montagners inhabiting the King's domains and Labrador Coast.

God	T-She-ma-ni-too.
Father	U-ta-ui.
Mother	U-ka-ui.
Son	U-ku-shishe.
Daughter	U-ta-nishe.
Brother	Nishe-teche.
Sister	Nirnishe.
Husband	Nenapine.

Wife	Nih-she-kui-me.
Boy	Nape-she.
Girl	I-spe-kui-shishe.
Child	A-wa-she.
Man	Napen.
Woman	I-she-kué.
Head	U she-ti-ku-an.
Face	U-ta-she-ta-mik.
Nose	Ut-she.une.
Nostrils	U-le-ti-kune.
Eyes	U-t-she-she-kue.
Eye brows	Mi-chi-a-la-nanne.
Ear	U-ta-u-gué.
Forehead	Ta-ku-ethe-u-she-tu-kan.
Hair	U-she-te-ku-an-ku-un.
Cheek	U-ta-che ta-mik.
Mouth	Ue-tune.
Throat	U-ku-ta-she-kui.
Lips	U-tas-u-toone.
Teeth	Ui-bite.
Tongue	U-te-li-ni.
Beard	Uta-she-ta mick-a-pieu.
Neck	U-ku-yat-she.
Shoulder, Elbow	Ut-She-Koon.
Arm	U-she-pe-toone.
Hand, Fingers	U-til-shi.
Nails	U-shi-ka-shin.
Breast	Ne-she-kat-shi-gan.
Belly	U-a teye.
Bark	Ni-spi-squan.
Feet	Ni-shit.

Knee	Nit-shi-kune.
Heart	U-te.
Stomach	U-shi-kat-shi-kane.
Blood	U-mi-kui.
Milk	Tu-tu-she-na-pu.
Skin	U-sha-ge-u.
Flesh	U-yashe.
Bones	U-she-kan.
Hearing	Peta-gun.
Sight	Shi-ti-shua-nu.
Taste	Kut-shi-ta-gan.
Smell	Mi-la-ta.
Touch	Tat-shi-na.
Voice	A-ya-mi.
Speech	A-ra-mi-ta-ku-shin.
Name	U-shi-ni-ka-shu.
Scream	Ta-pu-an-nu.
Noise	Na-no-ta-ku-shu-na-niu.
Cry	Ayaskiguan.
Tears	Mane.
Laughter	Papi-uan.
Sneezing	Nita-timi-kune.
Scratching	Mama-ta-ui.
Trembling	Nana.balu.
Singing	Nika-mune.
Lying	Kathshi-la-si-une.
Standing	Nepa-ui-ta.
Sitting	A-pi.
Going	Mat-she.
Sleep	Ni-pa-nui.
Dream	Pa-ua-min
Jump	Kua-shi-ku-te-u.
Running	Uit-sha-ui

Dancing.................................. Ni-mi-un
Holding.................................. Matshi-ku-ne.
Love..................................... Shat-shi-a.
Hate..................................... She-kat-shi-a.
Glad..................................... Mi-ru-e-ri-tane.
Joy...................................... Iri-ne-me-ru-e-ri-tan.
Sorrow................................... Nashi-ta-mi-ri-tune.
Pain..................................... A-ku-shi-une.
Trouble.................................. Nastamin.
Lasy..................................... I-shi-ti-mi.
I.. Ni.
Thou..................................... Tshir.
He....................................... We-la.
Ye....................................... Ki-la-ua.
They..................................... Wi-la-ua.
To eat................................... Mitshu.
To drink................................. Mi-ni-ku-an.
To carry................................. Uen-tshi-u-tauni.
To throw................................. Ui-bin.
To cut................................... Thi-mi-shin.
To hide.................................. Ka-ta.
To beat.................................. Ma-shit-she.
To work.................................. A-tu-se-un.
We....................................... Nilanne.
Birth.................................... Iri-niu.
Race..................................... Ara-shi-ri-ni-ou.
Marriage................................. Ni-ba-ui-ni-lu.
Widow.................................... Shi-ka.
Life..................................... Iri-ni-uin-ni-la.
Body..................................... Ui-yo.
Soul..................................... Ut-atsha-ku-shi.
Death.................................... Nipu-uin-lu.
Age...................................... Sha-sha-yes-shi.

Youth	U-she-nat she-un
Big	Mi--shi-the-shi
Small	Ape-shishe.
High	I-she-pa-na-she.
Low	Ta-la-pa-na-shu.
Cold	Thi-shine.
Warm	Thi-shi-leu.
Stupid	A pie-ili-pua-katshe.
Wise	Kat-shi-ta-ue-le-tok.
Strong	Shutshi.
Weak	A-pu-shutshi.
Thin	Pa-pa-ka-shu.
Thick	T-shis-pa-ka
Broad	A-la-gaska.
Narrow	Sha-ka-ua-shu.
White	Ua-ban
Black	Ka-shi-teu.
Red	Mi-ku-au.
Green	We-sha-wa-u.
Blue	Kait-shi-te.
Yellow	Ui-sha-ua.
Sun	Pechime-Thishek.
Moon	Pechime-Ti-be-shi-ka.
Star	Ala-ku-she.
Sky	Tshi-maru-tu-te ta-pi-an.
Fog	Pe-teshe-kanne.
Clouds	Kas-ka-uen.
Wind	Lu-tin.
Blowing	T-shi-shi-lu-tin.
Storm	Irini-usham-madshat-shika.
Rain	Thi-mi-uin.
Thaw	Kuni-mits-hu-be-ru.
Thunder	Uni-mit-shui.

Lightning	Wa-wa-shite.
Snow	Cone.
Ice	Mishicumi.
Fire	She-ku-teu.
Light	Ua-ban.
Shadow	A-ku-atsh.
Dark	Tebeshi-ka.
Day	Tshi-shika.
Morning	T-shi-pajatshi.
Evening	Ue-takith shi.
North East	Ma-mit-shi.
North West	Sha-uen-lutin.
Summer	Ni-pi ni.
Winter	Pi-pu-ne.
Autumn	Ta-ku-atshi.
Spring	Mi-ru-she-ka-mitshe.
Year	Pi-patche.
Water	Nipi.
Sea	Ui-nipi-que.
Lake	Sha-ka-i-gan.
River	Shi-pi-shi.
Island	Mene-shetiku.
Land	Le-gau.
Clay	Uabatou-niske.
Hill	Pinasi-uiska.
Shore	Na-ta-gu-me.
Mountain	Uatshi.
Rock	T-shi t-shi-ga.
Iron	Pi-ua-bishe.
Weeds	Maska-shu.
Trees	Mina-shi-kua.
Bark	Ua-lat-shiske.
Branch	Uti-ku-an.

Flower	Wa-bi-ku-ne.
Beast	A-ui-shishe.
Fish	Na-meshe.
Worms	Mani-toochi.
Frog	T-uishi-pi-mit-she.
Mouse	Apikushishe.
Goose	Wa-bishi-kua.
Duck	Irini-ship.
Feathers	Mi-ku-anne.
Eggs	Ua-uo.
Nest	U-This-tane.
Hut	Mitchu-ab.
Door	She-kua-tem.
Hearth	Ast-she.
Hatchet	U-she-las ku.
Knife	Mo-couman.
Building	A-she tu-ru-in.
Clothes	Ma-ni-tu-ue-gane.
Rain	The-mi-uin.
War	Nan-to-bu-riu.
Quarrel	Nashe-ta-mi-ba-ri-ut-che.
Fighting	Mashi-kag-ga-uin.
Spear	Ani-tu-gan.
Guard	Shi-ma-ga-niss.
Victory	Mat-shi-kua-ka-nu.
Distress	Kat-chi-to-ma-uine.
Friend	Ni-ka-nishe.
Enemy	Mat-shi-iri-ni-uetchi.
Servant	Co-pa-nishe.
Chief	Utshe-ma.
Writing	Mashi-naitche.
One	Peiogue.
Two	Nishoo.

Three.................................... Nisheloo.
Four.................................... Ne-oua.
Five.................................... Pete-tishe.
Six.................................... Nikute-washiche.
Seven.................................... Nechouache-che.
Eight.................................... Nichoo-ochi.
Nine.................................... Pe-io-kué-she-té.
Ten.................................... Ni-koo-too-reni-oo.
Twenty.................................... Ni-Shoo-ri-ni-oo.
Thirty.................................... Ni-she-too-ri-ni oo.
Forty.................................... Ne-oua-ri-ni-a-oo.
Begining.................................... Pitshe-rique.
Ending.................................... Matshi-telle.
Yes.................................... Hu hu.
No.................................... Nu-ma.
Before.................................... Niche-tam.
After.................................... Pa-touche.
Here.................................... E-Kue-te.
There.................................... Ma-koo-wes.
Yesterday.................................... A-ya-wichi-ta-koo-shishe.
To-day.................................... A nootche-kashigatt.
To-morrow.................................... Wa-batshe.
Look.................................... Wabata.
When.................................... Tan-es-he-pitche.
Where.................................... Tau-té.
What.................................... Te kuan.
Who.................................... A-wenne.
With what.................................... Thsi-koo-a-riou.
Under.................................... Ta-peohishe.
Upon.................................... Ta-kootche.

January..... Tshipishime........................ The great moon.
February... Epiché-na-mas-kui Pishime... Snow falls from the leaves.

March........	Mitisu	Pishime............	Eagle moon.
April.........	Nishique	"	Bustard moon.
May...........	Uabikum	"	Budding moon.
June	Ui-sha-ku	"	Rutting moon.
July..........	Pinauéu	"	Moulting moon.
August......	Ushé-kau	"	Carribou horns cast their moss.
September..	Uatshétshi	"	The leaf turns yellow.
October	Penatshi	"	The leaf falls.
November..	Takuatche	"	The fall month.
December..	T-Shé-pa-peu	"	The hard or severe month.

A JOURNAL

OF A JAUNT THROUGH THE KING'S DOMAIN,
MINGAN SEIGNORY &c. IN THE
SUMMER OF 1808.

I

Having been advised for the benefit of my health, after a serious illness at Quebec, to go and breathe the purer country air, and being at the same time willing to acquit myself of a duty imposed upon me by the North-West Company to manage their affairs in the King's Posts and Mingan seignory, I set out on a tour to these posts in a large birch canoe, with four men, on the 29th July.

The wind and tide being strong against us, we were forced to put ashore on the north of the Island of Orleans, eight leagues below Quebec, where a north-east gale detained us three days. The inhabitants, seeing our tents and canoe from a distance, took us for Micmacs and kept aloof, as they stood in great awe of those savages who, it seems, were in the habit of committing depredations among them.

The next day, however, they discovered their mistake and flocked around us with as much curiosity as might be shown by the inhabitants of Nootka Sound on their first seeing white people. They were very civil and pressed us much to accompany them to their houses, but as we entertained nearly the same opinion of them as they did of the Micmacs, we did not like

to leave our baggage. I could not, however, resist the pressing invitation of a young man, who, on the part of his father, had come the distance of a league to invite me to dinner.

We repaid all the hospitality shown us on this island with drams and seal skin *blagues*, which were thankfully accepted and, at last, drew more customers to our standard than we had wherewithal to satisfy.

The Isle of Orleans is eight leagues in length. The soil being dry and sandy, peas and potatoes grow best on it. The sloping green appearance of the fields, which are here and there interspersed with tufts of wood and the white houses, makes them look like so many country seats, and very beautiful. This island is divided among a number of petty seigneurs, most of them illiterate *habitants*. One of these bumpkins having presented himself, some years ago, to be elected as member for the county, could find nothing else to recommend himself to the electors but that he raised the greatest quantity of the best peas of all the inhabitants of the island.

At St Joachim, the parish above *Cap Tourmente*, the Priests of the Quebec Seminary, to whom this parish belongs, have a country seat to which they retire with all the students for a month during the vacation. This is a great place for wild geese, in the spring and fall, but the bucks of Quebec, whenever they stray this way in search of amusement, (up to the hips in mud,) prefer snipe shooting, which is quite fashionable. It would look vulgar to fire a random shot at a goose.

St Joachim.

The 31st, having taken our leave of our new acquaintances on the Isle of Orleans, we took advantage of the return of the fine weather to continue our journey, and in the evening, (with a firm strong current the most of the day in our favour,) we got to Murray Bay, the fag end of civilized settlements in this direction.

The Little River. The Little River, the first parish we passed this day, is situated at the foot of high perpendicular rocks, and the farms between these and the St Lawrence are but small. The resources of the people, therefore, consist in sugar and eels, with which the mountains and river supplies them in great abundance, a compensation, as it were, for confining their fields within such narrow limits. We saw a number of orchards at this place. An *habitant* from whom we bought some milk said that some seasons he sold three hundred bushels of apples and cleared upward of sixty pounds by his orchard.

The people of Little River having, after the seasons for making sugar and fishing eels and collecting their small crop are over, nothing to do but to amuse themselves, pass away the rest of the time as merrily as they can. Scarce a man of them but plays the fiddle pretty well, nor a woman who does not dance and sing, as if just imported from Paris.

Bay St Paul. The parish of *Baie St Paul* appeared screwed in a deep valley between high mountains. The land here is fertile and produces good pine, from which the inhabitants extract the tan.

Les Eboulements. The *Eboulements* are so called from the ravages made in former days by an earthquake, of which deep scars are still remaining in the face of those venerable hills. Poverty dwells here in its most ragged and emaciated form. Hardly any thing but potatoes will grow on these barren mountains, on which a number of poor people are roosted to toil and starve for three fourths of the year.

Isle aux Coudres. *Isles aux Coudres* lies off the Bay St Paul and *Eboulements*, about a league. It is three leagues in circumference, belongs to the Seminary of Quebec, and appears to make the inhabitants live very comfortably. These, like the people of Orleans, are

civil and good natured, which may be owing to their priest who keeps them under good discipline.

In 1762, there were no lands cleared and no houses built at Murray Bay, but, at present, it swarms with Canadians. As the *habitants* of Point Levis and Beauport, as well as others living in the immediate vicinity of Quebec, assume the surly tone and illbred look of the gentry of *Cul de Sac* and St Roch, so the people of Murray Bay seem to have formed their manners upon those of their next neighbours, the *polished* inhabitants of King's Posts. **Murray Bay.**

The 1st August, we left Murray Bay early in the morning and, with the help of a strong current, we got in good time to Tadousac. Before we arrived at this place, the tide very uncivilly left us to wait its return upon the centre of *Battures aux Alouettes*, a bank on the west side of river Saguenay which dries every tide and extends three leagues into the river.

The Black River, which forms the western boundary of the King's Posts, is but a rivulet; a few salmon are caught at its mouth by the Micmacs from the south shore and the people of Murray Bay, who have many fierce engagements on these occasions.

Tadousac, from its centrical situation, is considered the head- **Tadousac.** quarters of the King's Posts. It is here the French are said to have first landed and to have built a small town after their arrival in Canada, but no other vestiges now remain of such a place but the foundations of a few houses. The present buildings, consisting of a dwelling house, outhouses and a chapel which has stood one hundred and ten years, stand upon the angle formed by the junction of the Saguenay with the St Lawrence. The Saguenay flowing on the west between two immense ramparts of rocks, a chain of high mountains in the shape

of a semi circle on the north and east, and the St Lawrence in front, give this place rather a romantic appearance.

The harbour is a beautiful sandy bay in the shape of a horse shoe, a mile in circumference. The bank on which the houses are built rises about twenty feet above the level of the water. It is divided into two equal parts by a brook of clear water and, though composed of sand, it is covered with green turf.

The people fishing, the whales playing in the basin before the house, the cattle grazing around the gardens, the birds flying about, with the universal verdure which prevails in the summer season, give the place a lively appearance. But how sadly the scene is reversed in the winter, when, not only the animated part of the creation retires from the horrid prospect, but the very rocks and trees seem to shrink and groan under the heaps of snow which cover them. The latter are actually torn up by the roots or broken in splinters by the westerly wind which rushes from the Saguenay with a violence which threatens to sweep every thing before it.

There are six field pieces at Tadousac, by the respectable appearance of which, (as well as by the Indians showing themselves in red dresses,) the clerk of the post, Mr. Martin, saved the place, in 1775, from the depredations of the American privateers, who, in the same year, plundered and destroyed most of the rest of the ports, for want of like advantages and stratagems.

The etymology of the word "Tadousac", I have not been able to trace ; some persons say it is a corruption of *Tête du Sac*, the bay before it bearing some resemblance to a bag ; the Indians call it *Shate shi kush*, the entrance of the River (1).

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(1) Mgr Laflèche, Bishop of Three Rivers, who was for many years a missionary among the Indian tribes of the North-West, says that its proper name is Tadoussâk, from Totoushak, the plural of Totoush, *mamelon.*

The 2nd, we continued our travel up the Saguenay, and on the 4th, we arrived at Chicoutimi, reckoned thirty leagues from our last stage, Tadousac. The Saguenay River.

The Saguenay is the largest and the finest river on the coast; it runs east one hundred and fifty leagues to Tadousac from Lake *Shaganaga*, or Stony Lake, which is but one and a half league in circumference, and marks the height of land between Hudson's Bay and the River St Lawrence. At its entrance, it is nearly a league in breadth, and though so deep that no bottom has ever been found, the passage is dangerous, owing to the current which is remarkably strong, running with irresistible force upon two reefs of rocks which project into the river on each side, and are visible only at low water, when, the current being slack and the danger visible, the pilot seizes this favorable moment either to pass into or out of the River.

The Saguenay is navigable for vessels of any burthen to Chicoutimi, to which place the tide rises, and whales and purpoises are seen. Its common breadth, from Tadousac to Chicoutimi, is from one and a half to three miles, and soundings, sixty fathoms. Beyond this last place, as far as Lake St John, the distance of twenty four leagues, the water collects within a narrow channel and passes with such force and velocity among rocks and over precipices as are impossible to stem. Passed Lake St John, which is twelve leagues across, the Saguenay, to its source, is a continuation of falls and rapids.

The most remarkable of these falls is called the *Chaudière*, about half way between *Assuapmousoin* and Lake St John. This large river, collecting into a narrow compass, precipitates itself at this place over a rock at least one hundred and fifty feet high with a foaming and noise surpassed only by those of Niagara. But, to avoid being suspected of availing myself of the license of a traveller, it may be necessary to remark that the height just The *Chaudière* Falls.

mentioned is not perpendicular, and that the rock is divided into three parts, rising above each other like the seats in a theatre and forming three falls, each of which may be between forty and fify feet high.

From Tadousac, the bare rocks on each side the river maintain their elevated and rugged appearance for a distance of twenty-five leagues, when they gradually diminish and then become clothed with wood. Now and then, we are surprised by a wide gap on either side through which a river runs, abounding with salmon and trout. Five leagues below Chicoutimi, we passed a deep bay on our left which the French, the first time they passed this way, mistook for the channel of the River, and on discovering their mistake cried out " Ha Ha " ! It has, therefore, ever since retained the name of *Baie des Ha ! Ha !*

No scene can inspire one with gloomier and more terrific ideas than the one met when navigating this river on a dark, stormy night, the thunder rolling among those precipices with a rattling noise. The flashes of lightning discover to you, at intervals, the dismal objects around you and the danger you are in, and the reflexion that you are at the mercy of the jarring elements, which in a few minutes may dash you against the rocks into eternity, adds much to the horror of your situation.

Chicoutimi. *E-She-qua-ti-mi*, in the Indian language, signifies " the water is still deep ", (1) hence " Chicoutimi ". The post so called is situated on the point formed by the Saguenay, on the north and north-east and the Chicoutimi River, which is small and rapid, on the south-west. At this place there is a good dwelling house, a chapel and a store which was built in 1707, as written above

(1) *Ishko,* up to there ; *timew,* it is deep.—Mgr Laflèche.

the door (1). The goods for the interior posts are brought this length in the summer in a schooner or boats, and afterwards conveyed by the Indians in small canoes up the country by way of Chicoutimy River, which brings them to Lake St John.

The 4th August, having procured two small canoes, with a Canadian and an Indian to each, I left my large canoe and crew at Chicoutimy and set out, myself in one canoe, and the baggage in the other, for Lake St John, where I arrived the third day after making ten portages and seeing nothing remarkable.

The Chicoutimy river, only seven leagues in length, brought us into *Kinogomie*, or Long Lake, seven leagues long; making a short portage, we fell into *Kinogomie-shish*, a lake three leagues more in length, then into *Rivière des Aunais*, a small serpentine river, three leagues long, after which we got into *La Belle Rivière*, a small river which brought us into Lake St. John, and is four leagues long.

Lake St John is circular and, though thirty leagues in circumference, can be seen with one glance of the eye. The north shore is low and swampy, and the south, more elevated and covered with wood. The country from *Baie des Ha Ha* till we pass Lake St John, the distance of ten leagues, is fit for cultivation, the soil being good, the face of the country pretty even, and the climate the same as at Quebec, from which, across the country, it is distant three days' journey, either in a small canoe or on snow shoes. **Lake St. John**

The sort of woods which grow on this fertile tract of land are: maple, red and white pine, white and black birch, ash, cedar and elm.

(1) There was, in 1750, a saw mill on the River *Oupaouétiche*, one and a half leagues above Chicoutimi, which worked two saws, night and day.—" *Mémoire sur les postes du domaine du Roy* " adressed to Bigot by Father Claude Godefroy Coquart, 5th April, 1750.

The ruins of a Jesuit establishment

The post of Lake St John is built on the south of the lake, four leagues from its entrance, at the mouth of a beautiful river where the Jesuits, under the French Government, had a settlement for the purpose of instructing the Indians, until expelled for receiving too costly presents of furs for their spiritual services.

Some marks of their industry and improvements are still to be seen at this place. The plum and apple trees of their garden, grown wild through want of care, yet bear fruit in abundance. The foundation of their church and other buildings, as well as the church yard, are still visible. The bell of their church, two iron spades, a horseshoe, a scythe and a bar of iron, two feet in length, have lately been dug out of the ruins of this apparently once flourishing spot, and, adjoining, is an extensive plain or meadow on which much timothy hay grows (1). An island in the lake, near this place, swarms with snakes which, the Canadians believe, were conjured by the Jesuits, from their own residence.

Lake St John is shallow, with a sandy bottom ; small white fish, *doré*, pike, and a sort of fish resembling salmon, one and a half foot long, called by the Indians *Winanis*, are found in it, though not in great numbers.

The *Assuapmousoin* post.

Having set out from Lake St John on the 8th, we arrived at *Assuapmousoin* on the 14th, a distance of sixty leagues of the most unchristian like country. On both sides of the river the bank was high and scraggy, and not even a wild berry to be met with, all the way. A few dwarf spruce trees scattered here and there were the only productions of this most barren part of the world we could see, and our ears where charmed by no

(1) " The Jesuit Fathers had mills at Lake St John ; some of the materials used in their construction have been found lately ".—Mr. James McKenzie's evidence, given before a committee of the House of Assembly in 1824.

other music than the hissing of snakes, which, whenever we went on shore, sallied forth from the crevices of the rocks to wag their long tails before us, or trust them round our feet. We made eighteen portages, the paddle was seldom used, and the setting pole took its place the most of the road.

The word *Assuap* means "to watch" and *Mousua*, "moose deer", which in former years were very numerous at this place, but are now as scarce as they are on the Plains of Abraham. *Assuapmousoin* is indeed the poorest and shabbiest of Her Majesty's posts. A hut, a small store and a small potatoe garden were all the improvements that could be seen at this lonely, miserable place (1). The Indians of this posts consist of a dozen lazy families, who are not Christians. They live, in winter, chiefly on hares, and, in summer, on fish. This place communicates with the River St Maurice by small lakes and rivers, and is said to lie due north from Maskinongé.

As I had seen enough of the country to satisfy my curiosity in this direction, and had the coast still to visit, and as, moreover, the cold weather had set in, I returned from *Assuapmousoin* on the 15th and arrived at Tadousac on the 30th of August. The Indians managed their small canoes, coming down the rapid and cascades of the Saguenay, with astonishing dexterity, and they are equally expert in using the setting pole, going up. A Canadian requires a long time to learn to manage those ticklish vehicles with any degree of safety on such dangerous navigation.

Mistassini; Hudson Bay and North-West Cos' posts.

The post of *Mistassini*, a word which means "a large stone," is reckoned at a distance of ninety leagues from *Assuapmousoin*. The canoe route is by the Saguenay, to her source, the course

(1) The post of *Assuapmousoin* was on a small lake of the same name.

N. W. a distance of thirty leagues, then down the stream, sixty leagues north-east, till you fall into the great Lake Mistassini. The number of carrying places is thirty two, the longest of which is three miles. The longest portage from Chicoutimy to *Assuapmousion* is about the same length, and we meet with it immediately on leaving the first named place. The road in all the portages we passed was as good (being commonly over rock,) as in the River Unopic, but the carrying places to Mistassini, we were informed, were dreadfully rough. The country to the height of land is low, swampy and mossy, with small spruce trees thinly scattered, after which it becomes again mountainous and woody for most of the way to Hudson's Bay.

Lake Mistassini is so extensive that the natives do not know the dimensions of it ; they, however, say there are bays in it as large as Lake St John. It abounds with such fish as are found in other lakes throughout the country, and from the country bordering upon it we get the finest of our furs, to which the severity of the winter (lasting eight months,) is extremely favorably.

Our post (1) is situated at this end of Lake Mistassini, and that of the Hudson Bay, which is fitted out from East Main Factory, and called "Birch Point," is built four days journey farther off, on the edge of a small lake out of which the water communication to the Factory takes its source. After leaving our establishment

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(1) In his evidence before the select committee appointed by the House of Assembly, during the session of 1823-1824, to consider the subject of the settlement of the Crown Lands, Mr. James McKenzie says that this post was built at the south-west end of the lake, " on a long, elevated point projecting into the lake and joining the mainland by a narrow neck." The situation was beautiful, the soil not bad, but the climate cold, with ice on the lake, sometimes till July.

He also adds that there were no fixed trading stations on Lake Mistassini until the North-West Company leased the King's Post. " The former lessees sent goods there to trade, every spring, by a large river, as large as the Assuapmousoin, which falls into Lake St John, from the north."

to get to Birch Point, we con'inue for twenty-five leagues along the lake till we come to the large stone from which it takes its name, and then we strike off, south west, till we arrive through lakes and rivers at the English Post (1).

Lake Mistassini, keeping an easterly direction, discharges far to the eastward into James Bay by Rupert's River, which is said to be as large as the Saguenay (2).

The Indians who trade at Birch Point come from the Bay, and are in every respect the same as those trading at our post, where they, occasionally, take a sly trip to dispose of their odds and ends, or the scraping of their *Maskimutes* (3), to which frequently very fine martens inadvertently stick. The Hudson's Bay people come to Birch Point in boats.

The distance between East Main Factory and Tadousac, by the canoe route, is, from the best of my information, three hundred leagues, and a half of this distance may be fixed at the source of the Saguenay, where the waters take opposite directions, so that my placing it, in the beginning of this account of the country, at the post of Mistassini was erroneous. A light canoe, well manned and well piloted, may perform the journey from East Main to Tadousac in twenty days.



(1) *Fort aux Anglais.*

(2) Mr. François Verreault, who was also examined by the select committee of 1823-1824, says, speaking of Lake Mistassini : " The lake has three outlets,—there are, to the right, two outlets, twenty leagues distant from each other, that on the left hand is four leagues distant from that of the middle—that on the left hand falls in Hudson's Bay. The two others unite again at the distance of forty leagues, or thereabouts and flow into Hudson's Bay. The place where they reunite themselves is called *Newishqueska* (*Ne* comes from " point, " *wishque* from " birch bark " and *ska,* " much," and it may be rendered into English, " Birch Point. This point is also known by the name of *Fort aux Anglais..........* The fort was built of red spruce and grey pine, of which there is some hereabouts."

(3) Bags.

II

Portneuf.

We shall now take leave of the Saguenay and steer, north-east, along the St Lawrence and sea coast. On the 21st of August, having taken my large canoe and crew, *en passant* at Chicoutimi, I left Tadousac early in the morning and arrived the same day, in the evening, at Portneuf, which is fifteen leagues from Tadousac, and due north from the island of Beek. This place (six leagues in length from *Sault au Mouton* to *Sault au Cochon*, two pretty falls which at some distance appear like linen bleaching), though in the centre of the King's Domains, belongs to private individuals. It was given by the French to some petty *noblesse*. The soil is sandy and the beach level and skirted with small woods.

The post is built upon a high sand bank, with a fine river meandering before it and which soon loses itself in the St Lawrence. The deceased Mr. Peter Stuart resided there with his family while manager of the posts, to which circumstance Portneuf still owes several elegant buildings, besides a chapel in which His Holiness the Pope might not be ashamed to officiate.

Mille Vaches.

The Point and Bay of *Mille Vaches* (so called from the large stones in the bay, resembling, at low water, a herd of cattle), lie two leagues west of this post.

The seal bank.

This bay and point have of late years been as destructive to ships as they formerly proved to the seals which, in November of 1775, were left by the tide in such numbers on these shoals that the servants of the Lessees slanghtered, in the course of a few hours, between two and three thousand of them, the oil ex-

tracted from which produced as many pounds. It was then quite common to knock on the head from five to twelve hundred of those animals every year in the month of November and December, which is probably the copulating time, and this was called *la boucherie.* But the bank on which so much murder was committed at that time has been now many years worn away by the waves. The Bay of *Mille Vaches* yields hay enough for a thousand cows. *La Boucherie.*

The 22nd, we did not go farther than Post of *Ile Jérémie*, which takes its name from the man who first settled here. It is eight leagues from Portneuf. The buildings, among which is a chapel, are built upon an eminence amongst woods and rocks. This is the best of the Kings Posts for furs. **Post of** ***Ile Jérémie.***

A Canadian of the name of Vallé stays here with his family; he keeps the place in high order, and is a very civil person. His wife appears to have nothing prepossessing in her person and manners, but she makes up for any deficiency in these respects by keeping her husband's accounts.

The 23rd, early, we left, and on the 24th, we got to river Godbout, the distance, twenty two leagues. The banks of *Maniquagan*, which we passed on the way, and which are the terror of the mariners, extend three leagues into the River St Lawrence, and are ten leagues long. Three considerable rivers, the Betsiamis, Bustard and Maniquagan, discharge themselves on those banks. Their gaping mouths, at first sight, make a grand show, but they are choked at the entrance with sand. *Maniquagan* means " to set snares with the hand." **Manicouagan.**

The buildings at Godbout, like all those of King's Posts, are placed in a cluster, without order or method, as if they had **Godbout.**

dropped from the clouds, on a low sandy point on the east side of the Godbout river ; the high chain of rocky mountains which guards the coast keeping, with a surly look, a respectable distance behind this motley group.

This river, in which between fifty and sixty tierces of salmon are annually caught in nets, is but a few yards wide, and so choked with sand that only small craft can enter it even at high water. Wild fowls, codfish and lobsters are got in great plenty at this place in the warm season, and the post may be reckoned among the best for furs and seal oil.

The Seven Islands.

The 24th, at our usual early hour, we were in the canoe. On the 26th, A.M., we came to the Seven Islands and the same day we reached the " *Pointe aux-Cormorants*, nine leagues further on. The Seven Islands are reckoned six and twenty leagues north east of Godbout. In this distance we saw nothing remarkable excepting blueberries and raspberries, which appeared plentiful wherever we debarked.

The Bay of the Seven Islands is seven leagues in circumference. The point on which the houses (placed in the same beautiful confusion as at Godbout,) are built is low, sandy and covered with the usual uniform of His Majesty's Posts, brushwood and stunted spruce. The Seven Islands, stretching in the form of a crescent about a league along this point, defend it like a line of battle ships from the ravages of the waves, and form one of the best harbours on the coast.

We saw no fewer than fourteen widows with their orphans at this post. The same number were at (*Ile Jérémie*,) and each of the other posts maintained about *half as many* who never failed, whenever they came before us, to beg new dresses, for they are entirely supported at the expense of the lessees,......................
....The sunday trappings

of those poor though wanton wenches, hung to out dry on the branches, put us in mind of a rag fair. (1)

Lobsters are found in great plenty in the bay. It is astonishing that no oysters were ever found on the north shore of the St. Lawrence. The River Moisy, the next to the Saguenay in beauty and size, falls six leagues below the Seven Islands into the St. Lawrence, which here opens its jaws pretty wide, being thirty leagues across.

The 26th, passing the north-east extremity of the King's Domains at the Cormorants, we entered early in the morning on the seigniory of Mingan, and after sailing thirty one leagues along high, steep, rugged rocks on the one hand and nothing but the open sea the most of the way on the other, we arrived at the Head Post of the seignory the next day.

The situation of this post appeared to us the most delightful we had seen in the course of our travels through this barbarous coast. The beach, composed of hard sand and covered with turf, is, for six leagues level enough for a coach and six to drive on. The Mingan river runs gently about an acre behind the buldings till it falls into the Gulf, a mile below them. The view in front of the post, it must be owned, is a good deal obstructed by a cluster of islands, but this is in some degree recompensed by the shelter they afford, the grass which grows on them, and the numerous flocks of wild fowls that hatch around their edges. Mingan

The harbour is fit for "seventy fours" to ride in, and the buildings, among which is a chapel, are as good as any on the coast,

(1) What a difference between the miserable "Montagners" of the North Shore, in 1810, as described throughout by M. McKenzie, and the happy *Papinachois—les gens qui rient,* "they who laugh"—crowding around their missionaries, under the paternal and more sympathetic French Regime !

See : *Missions du Saguenay ; relation inédite du R. P. Laure, S. J.,* 1720 *à* 1730 edited by Rev : Father Jones, S. J., at Montreal, 1889.

For some distance on the west of the post, the sand being left to the skirt of the wood in high ridges proves that the spot where Mingan now stands was formerly overflowed by the sea which, by raising those mound in the course of time, forced itself within its present compass ; it is not improbable that the island, at some future period, may, in like manner, become a part of the main land, the intermediate spaces being now very shallow.

The old French post.

The wood about Mingan is the same as has been described at the Seven Islands. Salmon and trout are taken in the river, and seals shot in the harbour before the house. Mingan island is a mile in circumference, low and covered with grass, and lies three leagues above the post and one from the shore. The post stood here in the time of the French, who had it fortified ; a chimney and a well are, however, the only marks now remaining to prove the existence of such a place.

Iles aux Perroquets.

Near Mingan Island is a small rocky island called *Ile des Perroquets* from the vast number of these birds hatching on it, and it is remarkable as the sides of it appear from a distance like the walls of a garrison with the different kinds of birds arranged around the edge in the utmost order, like so many troops to defend it.

The " Great River St John " which divides the Quebec from the Newfoundland district, and where the coast of Labrador commences, falls into the Gulf three leagues west of the last mentioned island. Though honored with the epithet of " Great " in maps and books, we saw nothing to justify that appellation ; the entrance is narrow and full of sand. It produces between thirty and forty tierces of salmon every year.

Post *Napioshibou.*

On the 29th, we continued our journey from Mingan for thirty leagues to *Nepioshibou*, on the " Man River," where we arrived

the 30th, our course being north-east always, along a rugged shore and among islands. There is no harbour but for small craft, and that, in the river, which is difficult of entrance at this post. The situation is pretty, the banks of the river, though sandy, are green, but the river is not considerable. From eighty to one hundred tierces of salmon are annually caught here. The sand on the west of the buildings has been left by the sea in deep furrows as at Mingan. The buildings consist only of a dwelling house, a store and a shade. With respect to furs, this may be ranked among the inferior posts.

The 31st, we now hastened towards the end of our journey and the last of the posts on the seigniory of Mingan, *Masquaro* where we arrived on the 1st of September, the distance twenty leagues from the last post, fifteen of which were across a deep bay and along a sandy beach much exposed to the open sea, the remaining five leagues we passed upon islands. **Masquaro.**

Masquaro post is built on the river of that name, in a bay, among rocks and islands, and so well concealed that, in 1775, the American pirates did not discover it. This place has a new chapel, with a small house and store which, all together, make but a shabby appearance, but quantities of beavers and martens are found throughout the country bordering the post.

The Indians are much in the habit of trading with the Labrador fishermen, and of going with their furs to Great Esquimaux Bay, to which the distance across the country is but short, and where a number of peddlars from Quebec trade and fish.

There were two cows at *Masquaro*, which have lately died for want of grass, and two superannuated cats were the only domestic animals to be seen. We saw no cattle higher up the Saguenay than Chicoutimi, nor lower down the St Lawrence than Mingan. There is something very unaccountable either in **The cattle become unruly.**

the herbs or air of this coast which makes the cattle as wild and unruly as its other inhabitants. The Jesuits thought it was owing to the grass. A he goat, not long since, wounded with its horns the clerk of Chicoutimi in the thigh, and the bull another time almost finished him.

Natasquam salmon fisheries.

The largest river on the south of Mingan is the *Natasquan*, near half way between *Napioshibou* and *Masquaro*, it is about two and a half miles wide at the entrance but very shallow. Two hundred and fifty tierces of salmon are taken in nets out of this river every year by five men. The sand on the east side of the mouth of this river is collected into high hillocks in the shape of a sugar loaf; to use a comparison more familiar at *Natasquan*, we may say they resemble a woman's cap. Exclusive of the river already mentioned, there are seven more on this seigniory, into which salmon enters and which are pretty large, but it would be too tedious to describe them here.

The 2nd September we left *Masquaro* on our return to Quebec, where we arrived on the 15th, the distance two hundred leagues.

THE

NORTH-WEST COMPANY'S

"AGREEMENTS"

OF

1802 AND 1804

THE

"NORTH-WEST AGREEMENT" (1)

1802

WHEREAS by certain articles of agreement made and entered into at Montreal, in the Province of Lower-Canada, on the thirtieth day of October, one thousand seven hundred and ninety five, by and between Simon McTavish, Joseph Frobisher, John Gregory and William McGillivray, these composing the Firm of McTavish, Frobisher & Co, of Montreal aforesaid, merchants and co-partners, and Angus Shaw, Roderic McKenzie, Cuthbert Grant, Alexander McLeod and William Thorburn, these represented by Alexander McKenzie their Agent and Attorney, a Joint Concern or trade to that part of the Indian Country commonly called the North-West was agreed to be carried on, the said parties and others to be admitted Partners therein under the said Articles of Agreement on their joint account and risk for a certain term or number or years, that is to say to commence with the first Outfit of the year one thousand seven **Preamble.**

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(1) This is from a copy found in Mr. R. McKenzie's papers.

The North-West Company had no other Constitution but these "agreements" of 1802 and 1804. They proved sufficiently strong to carry them through their struggles with the Hudson Bay Company, "The Chartered Company," as they called it, and prevent further serious opposition among the Canadian traders.

hundred and ninety nine, and to terminate with the returns of the Outfit of the year one thousand eight hundred and five, the said Concern to consist of forty six shares and to be regulated and carried on under the different terms, stipulations and conditions in the said Articles of Agreement mentioned and contained ;

AND WHEREAS, under and in virtue of the said Agreement, the following Persons now carrying on trade to the said Indian Country as Partners, under the name or Firm of the NORTH-WEST COMPANY, that is to say the said Simon McTavish, John Gregory, William McGillivray and Duncan McGillivray, William Hallowell and Roderic McKenzie, now composing the said House or Firm of McTavish, Frobisher & Co ; Angus Shaw, the said Roderic McKenzie, Alexander McLeod, Wm. Thorburn, Daniel McKenzie, Wm. McKay, John McDonald, Donald McTavish, John McDonell, Archibald Normand McLeod, Alexander McDougall, Charles Chaboillez, John Sayer, Peter Grant, Alex. Fraser, Eneas Cameron, John Finlay, Duncan Cameron, James Hughes, Alex. McKay, Hugh McGillis, Alex. Henry, J. Bte. Cadotte, John McGillivray, James McKenzie and Simon Fraser conceiving it essentially necessary to alter and change the aforesaid articles of agreement and to form a more regular solid permanent system for the Government and Regulations of the various rights and interests of the Parties concerned in the said trade and commerce, in order thereby and by a mutual confidence and good understanding to unite and consolidate their interests in such manner as to render all attempts which now are or hereafter may be made by other Persons to injure them in their said trade and commerce fruitless and ineffectual, and above all to preserve and secure to the said Parties concerned, their heirs and assigns the many benefits and advantages which, by their united labours and exertions in the said Indian Country, they have become entitled to reap and receive in the further conti-

nuance of the said trade and commerce and particularly from the enlarged plan of carrying on the same and the increased number of outfits and other expenses which have become necessary for that purpose and which must eventually be productive of greater advantages and emoluments to the parties concerned;

THESE PRESENTS THEREFORE WITNESS that the said Simon McTavish, John Gregory, Wm McGillivray, Duncan Mc Gillivray, Wm Hallowell and Rod McKenzie, now composing the said House or Firm of McTavish, Frobisher and Company, of Montreal, aforesaid merchants; Angus Shaw, Daniel McKenzie, Wm McKay, John McDonald, Donald McTavish, John McDonell, Arch. N. McLeod, Alex. McDougall, Chs Chaboillez, John Sayer, Peter Grant, Alex. Fraser, Eneas Cameron, John Finlay, Duncan Cameron, Js. Hughes, Alex. McKay, Hugh McGillis, Alex. Henry, John McGillivray, James McKenzie, and Simon Fraser, do hereby consent and agree that from and after the first day of December of the year one thousand eight hundred and two, the aforesaid articles of agreement of the thirtieth day of October one thousand seven hundred and ninety five, be and the same and every part thereof is hereby declared to be rescinded and annulled in so far as the rights and interests of the said Parties to these presents are or may be thereby affected or bound and the said Parties to these presents do hereby mutually consent and promise and agree to carry to the interior part of the said Indian Country commonly called the "North-West", and to all and every other part and place where they shall see fit a trade and commerce in furs and peltries and other commodities on their joint account and risk as copartners, under the Name and Firm of the North-West Company to be governed and carried on under the following Rules and Regulations.

The Company constituted.

Its object.

ARTICLE 1

To last twenty years.

That the present copartnership or concern shall commence with the outfit of the year one thousand eight hundred and three and shall continue remain and be carried on for the space and term of twenty years hereafter, ending with the returns of the outfit of the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two by and between the said Partners to these presents and the survivors of them and others to be admitted Partners under the present agreement.

ARTICLE 2

Number and distribution of the shares.

That the present concern shall consist of ninety two shares to be divided held and enjoyed by and amongst the said Parties to these presents, and others to be hereafter admitted as Partners therein in manner following that is to say the said Simon McTavish, John Gregory, Wm. McGillivray, Dun. McGillivray, Wm. Hallowell and Rod. McKenzie, now composing the said House or Firm of McTavish Frobisher and Company or whatever persons the said House may be composed of during the present concern shall have hold and retain thirty shares, John McDonald two shares, Donald McTavish two shares, John McDonell two shares, Arch. N. McLeod two shares, Chs. Chaboillez two shares, John Sayer two shares, Peter Grant two shares, Alexander Fraser two shares, Eneas Cameron two shares, John Finlay two shares, Dun. Cameron two shares, Jas. Hughes two shares, Alex. McKay two shares, Hugh McGillis two shares, Alex. Henry two shares, Alex. McDougall two shares, John McGillivray two shares, Jas. McKenzie two shares, and Simon

Fraser two shares, making in all seventy six shares (1) and that the remaining sixteen shares not appropriated shall be disposed of to such person or persons as may hereafter be admitted into the present concern as a Partner or Partners therein or otherwise as the said Parties to these presents or their assigns being Partners in the said concern shall judge fit, and that until the said shares not appropriated or others hereafter to become vacant shall be disposed of the profits and advantages arising therefrom shall be equally divided among the existing Partners for the time being in proportion to the number of shares they hold in the concern who shall be liable to the risk and losses that may be sustained or thereby.

....(2)

ARTICLE 3

It is stipulated and agreed by and between the said Parties to these presents that the Persons who now or at any time hereafter during the period of the present concern shall or may compose the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Company, at Montreal aforesaid shall and they are hereby exclusively authorized and empowered during the said period to direct conduct and manage the affairs of the said North-West Company at Montreal for and on account of the whole, to import all the necessary goods merchandizes and commodities fit and necessary for carrying on the aforesaid trade and commerce to hire and employ all Clerks, Interpreters and engagés from time to time as shall be necessary and requisite for carrying on the said

The agents; their powers and duties.

(1) These only make sixty eight shares. Through some clerical error in this copy the names of Messrs Wm. McKay, Roderic McKenzie, Daniel McKenzie, Angus Shaw are omitted. They, probably, also possessed two shares each.

(2) Special conditions relating to a few individual members.

business to make all advances for Liquors Provisions and other necessary articles of the same kind which shall be charged at the current market price at Montreal, for which said advances and trouble the said McTavish Frobisher and C° shall be allowed by the said Concern a Charge of four per cent on the amount of the whole outfit at the close of each year and interest on the goods imported at the rate of five per cent per annum from the time they fall due in England to the thirthieth day of November of the year the outfit is made in, from and after which period the said McTavish Frobisher and Company shall be allowed interest at the rate of six per cent upon the said goods so imported until the same shall be paid and satisfied. That the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Company shall also be allowed interest at the rate of six per cent on all cash advances which may be by them considered necessary or expedient to be made for the use and benefit of the Concern it being understood that the said McTavish Frobisher and Company shall and will on their parts credit and allow for all in their hands belonging to any of the Partners under the present agreement interest at the rate of six per cent per annum. And in as much as the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Co must necessarily keep up the present number of Partners therein for the performance of the several duties they are hereby become bound to fulfill for and on behalf of the said North-West Company and in order also to avoid all doubts and difficulties which might arise in case of a change of all or any of the Partners of the said House during the present Concern, It is therefore stipulated and agreed that every new Partner coming into the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Co and being thereby admited to any right, share or interest in the Present Concern shall be specially held and bound in and by this agreement admitting him a Partner in the House, to the observance of all every the different clauses and stipulations mentioned and contained in the present agreement.

Their remuneration.

in the same manner as the present Partners in the said House are hereby held and bound, in which case every new partner so coming into the said House during the period of the Present Concern shall be by the said Concern held and considered as entitled to all the benefits and advantages and bound to all duties and obligations contained in this agreement as if he had been present and signed and executed the same as one of the Partners now composing the said House.

ARTICLE 4

That the Furs Peltries or other produce or returns of the aforesaid trade and commerce shall be shipped to England or wherelse it may be thought fit by the said house of McTavish Frobisher and Co, on the account and for the mutual benefit and advantage of the whole Concern for which trouble the said House shall be allowed a commission one half per cent on the whole amount of all that is sent to England and two and a half per cent on whatever part of such returns as may be sold and disposed of in the United States of America or sent that way to a market in any other country.—And that the neat proceeds of the said furs peltries or other produce and returns of the said trade shall be credited to each Individual of the Concern according to his share and proportion therein as soon as the same shall be placed to the credit of the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Co.

ARTICLE 5

That two at least of the Partners of the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Co for the time being shall annually go to the Grand Portage for the purpose of conducting managing and They render yearly accounts.

carrying on the business of the concern on the communication to and at the Grand Portage as heretofore practised by the agents of the North-West Company. That the said partners shall assume and be stiled Agents of the North West Company and shall be aided and assisted in all occasions by the Wintering Partners whose duty it shall also be to attend in a particular manner to the Business of their respective Departments.

ARTICLE 6

That the account of each year's outfit shall be regularly closed after the outfit is made by the said House of McTavish Frobisher and Co. and one set of accounts current shall be by them annually forwarded to the Grand Portage one set to Temiscamingue and to any other of the Departments when the Parties concerned cannot conveniently attend at the Grand Portage to be by the said Parties signed and interchanged and any of the said Parties having any objection to the said accouuts shall be bound to deliver in the same in writing within ten days after such account shall have been presented to him otherwise the said accounts shall be taken and considered as approved of by every such Party as fully and sufficiently as if he had signed the same.

ARTICLE 7

The annual meeting at Grand Portage.

That a meeting or meetings if necessary of the Partners as conveniently can attend shall be annually held in the month of June or July at the Grand Portage at which meeting the Partners who cannot attend may be represented by their attornies who shall be entitled to vote for them in order to deliberate and determine upon all such matters and things as to them shall seem fit and proper to be done and executed and performed in

and about the trade and commerce aforesaid and the interests thereof, and the majority of the Partners present or represented at the said meeting are hereby authorized and empowered to settle and determine all differences and difficulties among the Partners and all matters respecting the said trade and commerce or which by reason of the views, speculations and interests of the said concern becoming more extended may at any time hereafter be found necessary to be regulated, also to make such other and further Rules and Regulations (not being contrary to any Article of this Agreement) for the better managing and carrying on the said trade and commerce in future as they shall see fit. That every share in the said Concern shall be entitled to a vote of which fifty two shall be required and considered as a legal majority at the said meeting for deciding and determining upon all matters submitted to their consideration, and in all cases where the above number of fifty-two votes cannot be obtained by reason of the absence of Partners of shares unappropriated or otherwise, the legal majority shall in that case consist of the number of votes given and received that shall bear a proportion to all the appropriated shares at the time as fifty-two is to ninety-two. And it is hereby expressly convenanted stipulated and agreed that all and every the Rules, Regulations and decisions made and determined and resolved on by such majority in all the aforesaid cases shall be as effectual and binding upon all the Parties concerned, as well as those absent as those present at such meetings, as if herein specially expressed and provided for, and the said Parties and every one of them do hereby consent promise and agree to submit thereto and to execute and perform all things therein and thereby determined without opposition or delay. Its powers.

ARTICLE 8

That the arrangements of all the Forts and Posts to be occupied by the said Concern with their establishment the wintering residence of the Partners of the Clerks and others and all matters incident thereto, shall be fixed, determined and appointed and generally directed and conducted by the majority of the Concern present at such arrangements.

ARTICLE 9

Leaves of absence.

That the number of Wintering Partners to be allowed to go down to Montreal each year shall be regulated at the annual meeting of the Partners at the Grand Portage according to circumstances and agreeable to a list establishing the order of rotation which shall be made out at the commencement of this Concern by a majority of the Parties hereto or as they shall otherwise agree amongst themselves, provided that such number so to go to Montreal do not exceed five in any case whatever.—And it is hereby expressly stipulated and agreed that in case the Partner or Partners so going to Montreal shall neglect or refuse to return the ensuing Spring to fulfill the duties allotted to him or them by the Partners conducting the Business at Montreal without offering some good and sufficient reason or excuse of the validity of which the said annual meeting shall judge the said annual meeting may and they are hereby authorized to determine whether such Partner or Partners ought to be deprived of all his or their right and interest in the said Concern or of any and what part thereof and for what length of time, or in such other manner to determine respecting the same as to the said annual meeting shall appear just and

reasonable according to the circumstances of the case—and in every case when the said annual meeting shall think fit to order and determine that any such Partner or Partners by reason of his or their conduct in the premises ought to be deprived of all his or their share in the Concern the same shall be held and considered as forfeited and lost to every such Partner or Partners and shall cease and determine from the close of the outfit sent into the Country at the time such Partner or Partners was or were so permitted to go down to Montreal if not otherwise determined by the said annual meeting—and the share or shares of every such Partner or Partners shall at from and after the period they shall have been declared to have become forfeited by the said meeting revert to and be vested in the said Concern who are hereby empowered and authorized to appropriate and dispose of all and every such share or shares rights and interests to such other Person or Persons as they shall think fit.

ARTICLE 10

And to the end that a frugal distribution of the property and effects of the said Concern may be observed, it is hereby expressly understood and agreed that all and every of the said Parties to these presents or the Persons under them or any of them who shall wlnter in the Indian Country shall deliver or send to the Grand Portage every year and oftener if convenient and requisite a true faithful and exact account and Inventory of all the goods, provisions and other effects they or either of them may have remaining on hand as well as of the Peltries, debts due by the Indians and canoemen they or either of them may have left in the country with just and true accounts of the expedition of goods committed to their respective charge and direction, it **Annual reports or journals.**

being the intention that neither of the Parties who winter in the Indian Country or who come from Montréal to the Grand Portage on the business of the concern shall be allowed while there out of the common stock more than their personal necessaries but that whatever shall be expended by them or either of them exceeding this limitation shall be placed to the account of him or them making such expenditures.

ARTICLE 11

Expulsion for misconduct, &c.

AND WHEREAS from the remote situation of many of the said Parties in the Indian Country their distance from each other and the possibility of any or either of them conducting himself or themselves in such a manner as render himself or themselves unworthy by their improper conduct of continuing a Partner in the said concern, it is therefore expressly agreed on and is the will and intention of the said Parties to these Presents that when such misconduct or neglect shall be prov'd to the satisfaction of the majority of the annual meeting of the concern herein before established every such Party or Parties so misconducting or misbehaving himself or themselves shall and may upon the determination of the said annual meeting in every such case be expelled from the said Concern and his or their share and interest therein shall thereupon cease and determine and shall revert to and be vested in the said Concern who are hereby authorized to appropriate and dispose of every such share as their own property in such manner as they shall see fit reserving however to the said annual meeting the right and power to determine otherwise as to the share and interest aforesaid of every such Party so misconducting or misbehaving himself as circumstances may require.

ARTICLE 12

The present agreement being intended for the purpose of carrying a trade and commerce in and to all and every part and parts of the Interior Country or where else it may be thought fit for the benefit of all the Parties concerned, and whereas some or all of the said Parties now is or are or hereafter may be concerned or interested in some other trade or business, It is therefore hereby expressly stipulated covenanted and agreed by and between the said Parties to these Presents that they shall not nor shall any or either of them become bound or responsible the one for the other nor shall the act or undertaking of any one or more of them bind or oblige the others nor shall any of the said Parties not being the Agents and legal Attornies of the said Concern have any power or authority to make or execute any agreement contract any debt or debts for, on account or in the name of the said Concern or any of the Partners thereof without a special power to that purpose first had and obtained. **Exclusive powers of the agents.**

ARTICLE 13

It being incompatible with the nature of this agreement and the trade to be carried on under it that all or any of the said Parties to these presents should engage in or undertake any trade Business or Concern to the detriment of the interest of the present Company and Copartnership or that can or may in any manner injure, hurt or interfere with the trade views or speculations thereof, It is therefore mutually covenanted and agreed by and between the said Parties to these presents that they shall not nor shall any or either of them during the period of the present Concern either jointly or individually enter into **Penalties against competition.**

or engage in any trade Business or Commerce carried on or to be carried on in or to any part of the said Indian Country commonly called the North-West or its Dependencies or into any other posts places, or situations where the said Concern at the time of the commencement of this agreement or at any time during the continuance thereof shall or may carry on any trade or commerce, nor shall any of the said Parties directly or indirectly counsel advise assist or be concerned or interested in any trade business or commerce carried or to be carried on by other person or persons in the said Indian Country or at the said posts or places or their dependencies aforesaid, under the Penalty of FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS for each ninety second share held by the party failed or contravening this special clause and agreement, to be paid by him to the other Partners of the said Concern who shall or may conform hereto. And it is further stipulated and agreed by these presents that if any of the said Parties hereto or any other Person or Persons to be hereafter a Partner or Partners in this Concern shall at any time retire from or sell and dispose of his or their share and interest in the said Concern or forfeit or be deprived of his or their share therein under any of the articles of this agreement, every such party Person or Persons shall nevertheles be equally held and bound to the oberservance of this article and in case of contradiction thereto equally liable to the penalty of Five thousand pounds as if he or they had continued a partner or partners.

ARTICLE 14

Admission and resignation of Partners.

AND WHEREAS it is intended and necessary that the consent of the Parties concerned should be had and taken in all matters touching the arrangements to be made with Partners withdrawing from the said Concern or assigning their interest therein as

also for the admitting and receiving fit and proper persons as Partners in the said Concern instituting or defending suits settling and composing differences making and entering into agreements signing all necessary acts and deeds and doing other necessary matters and things touching and regarding the said Concern and the interest thereof in all cases when all or any of the matters aforesaid shall not have been regulated and determined at any of the meetings of the said Concern held at the Grand Portage as hereinbefore established and also for carrying into effect when necessary the Resolutions passed and adopted at such meetings : IT IS THEREFORE hereby stipulated and agreed that the said Simon McTavish John Gregory Wm. McGillivray Duncan McGillivray William Hallowell and Roderic McKenzie be and they or any two of them are hereby named constituted and appointed the Attornies of the said Concern for all the above purposes for and during the period of its continuance or until expressly revoked by the aforesaid annual meeting at the Grand-Portage as hereinafter mentioned and not otherwise.— And it is further stipulated and agreed that a Power of Attorney from the said Parties to these Presents and from all and every other Person or Persons who shall or may at any time hereafter be admitted a Partner or Partners in the said Concern be made and executed in due form of law to the said Simon McTavish John Gregory William McGillivray Duncan McGillivray William Hallowell and Roderic McKenzie as Attornies as aforesaid, giving to them or any two of them as aforesaid full power for all the above purposes and for doing and performing all such other matters and things which to them or any two of them as aforesaid shall appear for the benefit and advantage of the Parties concerned and when a more special power from the said Parties to that effect might be requisite and necessary.—And whenever it shall become necessary to appoint other Attornies in the room and stead of all or any of

Powers of the agents.

those hereinbefore named either by reason of their decease their retiring from the Concern or otherwise, it is stipulated and agreed that the Partners in the same House of McTavish Frobisher and Co. being Partners in this Concern shall always have the preference—It is however hereby understood and agreed that in case the said McTavish Frobisher and Co shall at any time make an improper use of the powers hereby conferred on them as Attornies as aforesaid it shall be in the power of the said annual meeting at the Grand Portage by a majority of voices to alter or change the same or substitute other powers in their stead according to circumstances and as in the opinion of such annual meeting shall seem most advantageous for the benefit of the Concern.

ARTICLE 15

AND WHEREAS it may happen that before the time limited for the expiration of the present Concern some of the Partners may die or retire therefrom or others be admitted as Partners therein, IT IS THEREFORE hereby expressly stipulated and agreed that such change or alteration in the persons of the Partners shall in nowise dissolve alter or change the present Partnership and Concern which shall neverthless continue and be carried on as the same Partnership and Concern under the Rules and Regulations contained in this agreement until the expiration thereof at the time hereinbefore limited.

ARTICLE 16

Shares of deceased partners.

AND WHEREAS great difficulties might arise by continuing and extending the share and interest of a deceased Partner in the Concern and all the rights and privileges he holds under it to

his heirs or legal representatives on account of their not being Parties to his agreement, their distant places of Residence and consequent inconvenience that might arise in their being represented at the meetings of the Concern, to avoid all which delays and difficulties, IT IS HEREBY stipulated and agreed that upon the death of any of the Partners in the said Concern his share and interest therein shall cease and determine and the same shall from after his decease revert to and become the property of the Concern to be by them used and disposed of as they shall see fit; but in order that such heirs or legal representatives may enjoy in some measure the Benefits of the care industry and exertions of such deceased Partner in the said Concern, It is hereby stipulated that the heirs or legal representatives of such deceased Partner shall, for and during the space of seven years from and after his decease if the concern do not sooner determine, be entitled to demand have and receive of and from the Concern (to be accounted for and paid to such heirs and legal representatives by the said McTavish Frobisher & Co. as acting for the said Concern) an equivalent to one half of the share and interest such deceased Partner held in the Concern, being the same right which a retired Partner is entitled to claim and receive as hereinafter is mentioned. And the heirs and representatives of such deceased Partner, by taking and receiving such equivalent, shall be severally held and bound to the observance of all every the articles of this argreement respecting the doing assisting or being concerned in any matter or thing which may tend to the damage loss or injuring of the Concern, and in case of contravention thereto he shall be deprived of all further benefit and interest to him or them out of the said Concern.

ARTICLE 17

How partners may retire.

Whenever any of the Parties to the Presents or others who may hereafter be admitted Partners in the present Concern may be desirous of retiring from the business of the Concern they shall and are hereby permitted to do so in the following manner and upon the following terms and conditions that is to say:— That the Partner now holding four ninety second shares under the present agreement shall and he is hereby permitted to retire from taking an active part in the Concern whenever he shall think fit and is hereby allowed to have and receive from the said Concern an equivalent of two of the said shares for and during the space of seven years from and after his so retiring if the present Concern shall so long continue and without any duty being attached to the interest he shall so receive. That the Partners who held one forty sixth share under the aforesaid agreement of the thirtieth day of October one thousand seven hundred and ninety-five and who now hold two ninety second shares under the present agreement shall and they are hereby permitted, two each year in rotation as their names stand in the agreement, to retire from taking an active part in the Concern upon giving one year's notice of such intention and shall have and receive from the said Concern an equivalent to one of the said shares for and during the space of seven years from and after so retiring if the present Concern shall so long continue but without being liable to any of the duties thereof. That Persons admitted as Partners under an assignment made to them of any of the aforesaid vacant fourteen shares or others who may hereafter be admitted as Partners in consequence of some of the existing Partners in the Concern having retired therefrom, or shares therein having become vacant, shall and they are

hereby permitted to retire from the Concern two each year in rotation as they shall have been admitted into the same after having wintered three years in the Interior Country as Partners and upon their giving one year's notice as aforesaid of their intention to retire, and not otherwise. That all Partners shall be permitted in manner as above stated without holding or retaining any share or interest as aforesaid in the Concern from and after the period of their retiring whenever they shall think fit. That upon any Partners retiring from the Concern his proportion of all the goods in the Indian Country shall be accounted for to him by the said Concern agreeable to the following method which has been hitherto followed and observed in similar cases by the Persons heretofore concerned in the aforesaid trade and commerce, that is to say : The goods at the Grand Portage shall be accounted for at the rate of twenty-five per cent on the Montreal costs and advances, those at every other post in the North-West, except English River and parts beyond, at the rate of fifty-seven per cent on the cost and advances of the Grand Portage, those of the English River and Posts beyond it at the rate of ninety per cent on the cost and advances of the Grand Portage ; And as the present concern have in view to extend their posts to other and more distant parts of the North-West, towards the Rocky Mountains and beyond them, the charge on goods at all such Posts shall be regulated according to the expense of sending them thither when known. It is however understood and agreed that whenever it shall be found from experience that the expense of carrying goods to the Grand Portage or into the Indian Country or Interior Country shall increase or diminish, a new tarif shall be made out accordingly it being the intention that young men succeeding to shares shall pay no more for such goods than their true cost. That all debts due by Guides, Men or Interpreters shall be accounted for at one third of their amount, the debts of the Clerks at their full value

Mode of making up their accounts.

Valuation of goods.

Clerks' debts.

and it is expressly consented and agreed as a rule to be followed that all the forts and buildings at Grand Portage and in the Interior Country vessels boats cattle and all other property of and belonging to the said Concern upon the communication shall be accounted for comformable to the prices or value affixed to the same by the majority of the Concern the preceding year in the inventories made thereof; For all which said property or proportion of such retiring Partner therein the said Concern shall not be bound to account until one year after the account thereof shall be closed. That every Partner so retiring from the Concern is hereby considered to be subject to the same observance of and compliance with all the matters rules and regulations herein contained touching and concerning the said trade and commerce and in case of contravention thereto equally liable to the Penalties herein expressed as if he still continued an active Partner. That every Partner retiring from the Concern, except those who shall by misconduct or otherwise forfeit their shares and interest therein which thereupon revert to and become the property of the Concern as herein before mentioned, shall release assign and make over to the remaining Partners in the Concern or their Attornies herein before named for the benefit and behoof of the whole or to such person or persons as shall with the consent of the said Concern have been agreed to be admitted a Partner or Partners therein in the room or place such retiring Partner then holds or may be entitled to hold in the said Concern reserving to him the right to demand and receive of and from the said Concern for and during the space of seven years from and after the time of his so retiring if the Concern shall so long continue and be accounted for and paid to him by the said McTavish Frobisher and Company an equivalent to one half of the net produce if the shares and interest be held in the said Concern at the time of his retiring therefrom. And in case any partner should be desirous to sell and

Forts, buildings, vessels, &c.

Retiring Partners.

dispose of the interest he shall be entitled to have and receive from the said Concern after he shall have retired therefrom as aforesaid, he shall be permitted so to do provided such sale may be made to any of the Partners in the Concern who upon giving notice of their purchase shall be considered as vested in all the rights and interests and shall be permitted to have and enjoy the same in the same manner as such retired Partners could or might have done.

ARTICLE 18

That every Person hereafter to be admitted a Partner in this Concern shall be accepted and approved of by the other Partners or their Attornies named and appointed under this agreement and the said Partners or their said Attornies (or a Retiring Partner when it shall have been so agreed) shall thereupon by an Act in due form transfer assign and make over to every such person so to be admitted a Partner all such share and shares with the rights profits and advantages arising or to arise therefrom as it may have been agreed, such Persons shall have hold and enjoy in the said Concern, in and by which act every such Person shall bind and oblige himself to the performance and observance of all every the matter and things mentioned and contained in this agreement under the penalties therein expressed as full and effectually to all intents and purposes as if such Person had been a Party to these presents and signed the same.

ARTICLE 19

That all engagements and undertakings made and entered into by the Partners of the former North-West Company trading together under the aforesaid agreement of the thirtieth day of

October one thousand seven hundred and ninety five touching the aforesaid trade and commerce shall be assumed allowed and confirmed by the present Concern and by them be carried into force effect as if made and entered into by the Parties to these Presents.

ARTICLE 20

....(1)

ARTICLE 21

That whenever the Grand Portage is mentioned in this agreement it is understood to mean that Place of *Rendez-vous* for conducting and managing the general Business of the Concern in Summer, but should the Parties concerned determine and agree among themselves to remove and change such place of *Rendez-vous* from the Grand Portage to any other Place on Lake Superior more convenient for the purposes aforesaid the name of such shall be taken and considered as applying in the same manner to all the purposes of this agreement and being synonimous to the Grand Portage.

ARTICLE 22

And lastly it is stipulated and agreed that the present agreement shall be deposited with and remain in the hands of the Attornies of the said Concern hereby named and appointed and that every person having an interest therein shall be entitled to

(1) Article relating to Mr Alexander N. McLeod, who declined to take his share.

have free access thereto and communication thereof at all times when required.

IN WITNESS whereof the said Parties to these presents have hereunto set their respective hands and seals at the Grand Portage aforesaid this fifth day of July in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and two.

Signed,

Simon McTavish,	(L. S.)	Wm. Hollowell,	(L. S.)
Jno. Gregory,	"	Wm. McKay,	"
Wm. McGillivray,	"	John McDonald,	"
Dun'n McGillivray,	"	Arch'd McLeod,	"
John Sayer,	"	Alex. MacDougall,	"
Jas. McKenzie,	"	Alex. McKay,	"
Sim'n Fraser,	"	John McGillivray,	"
Chas. Chaboillez,	"	R'd. McKenzie,	"
Dan. McTavish,	"	James Hughes,	"
Peter Grant,	"	Eneas Cameron,	"
Dun. Cameron,	"	Dan. McKenzie,	"
H. McGillis,	"	Ang. Shaw,	"
Alex. Henry,	"	John Finlay,	"
Alex. Fraser,	"	John McDonell.	"

Signed sealed and delivered, no stamp being used nor by law required, by the within named Parties in Presence of us.

(Signed,) J. C. STUART,
" JOHN K. WILLES.

THE

"NORTH-WEST AGREEMENT"

1804

Preamble. THIS AGREEMENT made and executed at Montreal in the District of Montreal in the Province of Lower Canada this fifth day of November in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and four by and between John Gregory, William MacGillivray, Duncan McGillivray, William Hallowell and Roderic McKenzie being the Partners now composing the House of McTavish Frobisher and Company of Montreal aforesaid, the said Duncan MacGillivray being in this behalf represented by the said William MacGillivray his Attorney ; and Angus Shaw, Daniel McKenzie, William McKay, John MacDonald, Donald McTavish, John McDonell, Archibald Normand McLeod, Alexander MacDougall, Charles Chaboillez, John Sayer, Peter Grant, Alexander Fraser, Eneas Cameron, John Finlay, Duncan Cameron, James Hughes, Alexander MacKay, Hugh McGillis, Alexander Henry,

John MacGillivray, James McKenzie, Simon Fraser, John Duncan Campbell, David Thompson and John Thomson by the said John Gregory and William MacGillivray their Agents and Attornies duly authorised, the said Persons hereinbefore named being the Partners now composing the Company or Concern trading to the North-West or Indian Country and distinguished by the name of the Old North-West Company, OF THE ONE PART, and Sir Alexander MacKenzie, Thomas Forsyth, John Richardson and John Forsyth the last three trading in Montreal aforesaid under the Firm of Forsyth Richardson and Company, the said John Richardson and John Forsyth for themselves in their own persons, and the said Thomas Forsyth being represented by them the said Richardson and John Forsyth, his Attornies; Alexander Ellice, John Inglis and James Forsyth of London, Merchants, trading under the Firm of Phyn Inglis & Company by the said John Richardson and John Forsyth their Attornies, John O'Gilvie of Montreal aforesaid Merchant, John Mure of Quebec Merchant by the said John O'Gilvie his Attorney; Pierre Rocheblave, Alexander McKenzie, John MacDonald, James Leith, and John Wills, the last five being wintering Partners and represented by Sir Alexander McKenzie their Attorney; John Haldane another wintering Partner represented by the said John Forsyth his Attorney and the said Thomas Forsyth (represented as aforesaid) John Richardson and John Forsyth, as Trustees and assignees of the Estate of the late Firm of Leith Jameison & Company, and Thomas Thain of Montreal aforesaid, all of whom are Partners in the said North-West or Indian Country distinguished by the name of the New North-West Company OF THE OTHER PART.

WITNESSETH, that the said Parties to these Presents now and heretofore trading to the said North-West Country in opposition to each other being desirous to put an end to said opposition and to avoid the waste of property attending thereon and

to carry on the said trade in a more advantageous manner DO for this purpose consent and agree to coalesce and join their respective interests and to make the following stipulations and arrangements in that behalf.

ARTICLE I

That the said Parties to these Presents shall and do hereby coalesce and join their said respective interests in the trade and commerce aforesaid which joint interest and concern will commence with the Outfit of the year one thousand eight hundred and five and shall continue to be carried on during the period limited by the articles of agreement of the said Old Company bearing date the fifth day of July one thousand eight hundred and two, that is to say, for eighteen years yet to come. That the present Coalition and joint Concern shall be carried on under the name or Firm of the North-West Company and shall include as well the trade commonly carried on in and to the said North-West Country by both the said companies, as the trade carried on at all the other Posts or places now occupied by the said Old Company.

ARTICLE II

Distribution of the shares.

That the said Old Company shall hold and possess three fourths of the said joint concern and the said New Company shall hold and possess one fourth thereof and when the number of shares of the said joint concern shall be increased to one hundred, the said Old Company shall hold seventy-five of such shares and the said New Company twenty-five, in all profits and losses that shall occur in the said joint trade and concern.—That the said Old and New Company shall each divide their respec-

tive shares and proportions aforesaid in the said joint concern unto and amongst their individual members in such a manner as they shall see fit ;—It is however hereby understood and agreed that the said New Company or their representatives shall and do transfer and secure to each of their six Wintering Partners in the Interior Country one hundredth share of the whole of the said joint concern, and shall allow and pay to the said Wintering Partners and their Successors the same advantages and emoluments as shall be and paid by the said joint concern to such Wintering Partners of the said Old Company as do now hold one ninety second share therein, and which ninety second share will by the present agreement become one hundredth share in the said joint concern.

ARTICLE III

That the Partners of the said New Company and their Representatives shall hold and possess their said one fourth part or twenty-five shares in the said joint concern for and during the continuation of the present agreement and no such part or share as may become vacant by the death of any of the Partners in the said New Company or otherwise shall revert or belong to the said joint concern, but the same shall be preserved and retained by the said New Company or such Persons as shall become Partners in their Concern under such conditions and arrangements respecting purchases transfers and division of shares amongst themselves as they shall see fit; Upon condition however of being bound to fulfill and observe every engagement and stipulation which the present Partners of the said New Company have become and now are bound and liable to fulfill and observe by these presents agreeable to the forms and Rules established in this behalf by the said articles of agreement of

The conditions.

the said Old North-West Company bearing date the fifth day of July one thousand eight hundred and two (except in so far as the same are altered or modified by this agreement) and to all such other Rules and Regulations as shall be made by the said joint concern. It is however understood and agreed by and between the said Parties to these presents that in case of a vacancy by death or otherwise in any of the said six shares hereby reserved by the said New Company for their said six Wintering Partners such vacant shares shall revert and belong to the said joint concern and be by them disposed of and filled up as they shall see fit, and it is further understood and agreed by and between the said Parties that the share and interest which the late Firm of Leith Jameison and Company held in the said New Company shall at the expiration of the first outfit of the said joint concern be transferable to such of the Partners of the said New Company as shall agree to purchase the same.

ARTICLE IV

That the said New Company shall be entitled to and have and receive one fourth part or share of all the commissions and advantages that shall or may   or arise from the said joint concern, first deducting from the amount of the whole the actual expenses of the General Establishment for transacting the Business of the said joint Concern.

ARTICLE V

The "Wintering Partners."

That it being the intention of the said New Company at the expiration of their agreement bearing date the twentieth day of October of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight to put their said six Wintering Partners upon the same

footing in every respect as Wintering Partners of the said Old Company who now hold one ninety second share and which will become one hundredth share of the said joint concern when the number of the shares thereof will be increased to one hundred as aforesaid It is therefore stipulated and agreed that when the present agreement shall next summer at the Grand Portage or other place of Depot on Lake Superior be notified to the said Wintering Partners, they shall be bound to declare their acceptation thereof or their intention of retiring therefrom at the expiration of the aforesaid agreement of the twentieth day of October one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight and in case the six Wintering Partners or any of them shall decline to accept and acquiesce in the present agreement it is further stipulated and agreed that the said New Company shall have a right to fill up the vacancies that may happen by said refusal or retirement of all or any of the six Wintering Partners by such of any of their deserving Clerks as they shall see fit. It is however understood and agreed that after the said vacancies shall have been filled up by the said New Company the said Old Company shall have the right to appoint to, and fill up the three next vacancies that shall happen in the shares of the Wintering Partners of the said joint concern, the said Old Company having promised the same; which vacant shares being filled up as aforesaid, all other vacancies which shall or may happen in the wintering shares of the said joint concern shall be regulated and filled np according to length of service and merit without distinction or partiality resulting from the Person or Persons to be appointed having been a Clerk or Clerks either to the said Old or New Company.—AND it is further understood and agreed that in case of any of the said six Wintering Partners shall refuse to accept any share under the present agreement as aforesaid, he shall not in that case be exonerated or discharged from his debts or engagement by him entered into,

or to which he may be liable as a Partner of the said New Company but under the express condition of binding himself not to interfer directly or indirectly in the trade carried on or to be carried on by the said joint concern within the limits hereinafter described under the same restrictions and penalities as retiring Partners of the said Old Company are liable to under their aforesaid articles of agreement of the fifth day of July one thousand eight hundred and two.

ARTICLE VI

Negociations with H. B. Co.

That although the said New Company are by the present agreement limited to one fourth part of the said joint trade to be carried on from Canada into the Interior Country yet should circumstances arise in the course of events that should enable the said Joint Company to obtain a participation in the general trade and rights of the Hudson Bay Company or the whole thereof by purchase then and in that case it is hereby covenanted and agreed that the members who shall then represent the said New Company shall not be hereby precluded from negociating with the representatives of the said Old Company for a more extensive participation in said Joint Concern which thereby shall or may be formed or extended and for such Quantum hereof as shall be agreed upon ; But it is understood that any permission which may be obtained from the said Hudson Bay Company for a partial transit of merchandize or returns through their Territories shall not be considered as forming a ground for the Negociation of such increased participation ; And it is also understood that the said New Company shall sustain no part of the Expenses which have been occasioned by the late adventure made by the said Old Company to the Hudson Bay Territory by Sea ; But in case a permission shall have been ob-

Adventures to the Hudson Bay.

tained by the negociation which the said Dnncan McGillivray has been instructed to carry on with the Hudson Bay Company for such a transit, then the expenses of the said Adventure shall be fairly stated and a fourth part thereof be supported by the said New Company, who shall also sustain and pay a proportion of the consideration which may have been agreed to be given for such permission of transit and shall also be bound to fulfil the conditions of such agreement as may have been made by the said Duncan McGillivray in that behalf. That the said New Company shall not in any case be liable to the expenses or consequences of any law suit which the said Hudson Bay Company may institute by reason of the trespass they may conceive to have been committed upon their Territory or Rights by the said New Company, be bound to take part in any future adventure by sea to Hudson's Bay unless the Permission of that Company shall be first had and obtained.

ARTICLE VII

That one fourth part of all the goods wares and merchandize required for the purposes of the said joint trade shall be imported by the Agents of the said New Company from their correspondences in London and one undivided fourth part of the returns or exports of the said joint trade shall be consigned to the Correspondents of the New Company by their said Agents, and in no case shall there be a division of the said returns or exports between the said Old and New Companies previous to the sale thereof. That the whole of the Imports and Exports relative to the said joint trade shall always be on the account and risk thereof although imported from or consigned to distinct or different Houses. And the said Correspondents shall also effect the insurance upon the goods wares and merchandizes furnished by

The agents.

them and upon the consignments made to them as aforesaid. That at the request of the joint Agents of the said Old and New Companies each of them shall furnish a due proportion of capital and cash advances necessary for providing supplies and carrying on the said joint trade, which cash advances on the part of the said Old Company shall be furnished and paid by the House of McTavish Frobisher and Company and on the part of the said New Company shall be furnished and paid by the House of Forsyth Richardson and Company. That the proceeds of the returns of the said joint trade when realized shall be accounted for and divided or remitted and paid in the proportions above-mentioned as the case may require.

ARTICLE VIII

The "agreement" of 1802.

That the aforesaid Articles of agreement of the said Old Company bearing date the fifth day of July one thousand eight hundred and two (a copy of which is hereunto annexed) shall be binding on each and every of the Partners of the said New Company and their Successors and all others to be admitted Partners in the said joint concern in the same manner as if the said articles were inserted at length and formed part of the present agreement except in so far as they are altered or modified in and by this Present Agreement.

ARTICLE IX

Joint agency.

That the said New Company shall appoint and furnish two Agents being Partners of the said New Company and of the said joint concern to represent them and to be employed in such branch or branches of the exclusive department of the said joint

concern at Montreal as shall be found expedient and necessary, one of which said Agents shall go annually to the place of depot on Lake Superior, whenever the same shall be fixed, to participate with the Agents of the Old Company in the joint management of the outfits and other business and arrangements of the said joint concern, and which Agent of the said New Company shall be considered the Attorney of the Partners of the said New Company Wintering Partners thereof excepted, unless when such Agent acts by special power from any of the said Wintering Partners then absent and there vote for the said Partners accordingly. That such of the said Wintering Partners of the said New Company as may be present at the meetings of the said joint concern at the said place of depot, shall personally vote, and such Partner who may be absent may appoint as his Attorney any other Partner of the said joint concern as he shall think fit and the Wintering Partners of the said Old Company may do the like. That the said Agents of the said New Company shall act the one for the other as circumstances may require and when both of them are at Montreal one of them shall be considered as the acting Agent in the Department allotted to him and the other shall give assistance in that department when the same shall be required ; And it is understood that such other Agent when at Montreal after the accounts of each year from the Upper Country are settled shall take all necessary information and do every thing that may be requisite or useful in and about the Business to be done at the depot aforesaid the ensuing season.

ARTICLE X

The said New Company hereby nominate and appoint as their said agents the said John Ogilvie and Thomas Thain who shall

continue and remain as such and during the space of five years from the day of the date hereof and it is understood and agreed that exclusive of the Agent of the said New Company who shall go to the place of depot on Lake Superior for the Business of the said joint concern the said New Company shall and may the next ensuing Season if they see fit send up any other of their Partners to settle the Business of the said New Company and to consolidate the joint concern by delivering and receiving the property of the said two companies, which being effected the duties of such other Partner shall cease.

ARTICLE XI

Vacancies, how filled.

In the event of a vacancy in one or other of the Agencies of the said New Company during the said five years by death or the retiring of the said Agents or either of them from the said joint concern, or in case at the expiration of the said five years the said two Agents or either of them shall decline to continue as Agents or Agent as aforesaid of the said New Company, the Partners of the said New Company shall and may in such cases and in every other vacancy that may afterwards happen in the said Agencies nominate and appoint any other fit and proper Person or Persons as Agent or Agents as aforesaid being Partners of the said joint concern

ARTICLE XII

That all goods at Montreal shall be taken at cost and charges and the goods in the inventories and Indian Credits at the different Posts in the Interior Country belonging to each of the Old and New Companies (those remaining at Hudson's Bay includ-

ed) shall be received and takən by the said joint concern at the evaluation made according to the tarif of advance of the said Old Company now in all and the debts due by Winterers of the said Old and New Companies shall be assumed by the said joint concern according to the mode of evaluing the same by the said Old Company. That the Forts and buildings the vessels on the Lakes Superior, Huron and Erie, comprehending three eighths of the Schooner Nancy, shall be taken by the said joint concern upon a fair principle of evaluation to be agreed upon;— and all contracts and agreements made and entered into by either of the said Old and New Company shall be assumed and fulfilled hy the said joint Company according to the true spirit and import of every such contract and agreement.

ARTICLE XIII

Trade by Kingston, Niagara and Sandwich.

That the Business of forwarding the goods, wares and merchandizes of the said joint concern at Kingston and Niagara shall be conducted and carried on by the correspondents of the said Old and New Company jointly without any division being made of the said goods wares and merchandises and the said correspondents shall participate in the profits and advantages arising from the said forwarding business in the proportion of the interests of the said Old and New Company in the said joint concern. That at Sandwich, Angus MacIntosh the present agent of the said Old Company shall be continued as the agent of the said joint concern, but the correspondents of the New Company shall supply the proportion of provisions required for the said joint concern upon the same terms and conditions and of like quantities as those supplied by the said Angus MacIntosh while agent as aforesaid.

ARTICLE XIV

Tobacco.

That the Tobacco to be imported from the United States for the said joint concern shall be ordered proportionably from the respective correspondents of the said Old and New Company.

ARTICLE XV

That the mode of settling and determining all questions touching and regarding the said joint concern at the meetings thereof to be held at the place of depot on Lake Superior shall be according to the Rules and Regulations established by the aforesaid agreement of the said Old Company, reference being had to the increased number of shares into which the said joint concern will by the present agreement become divided, and every power which shall be given for the commencing and conducting of suits, or for other purposes at Montreal shall include the names of the Agents of the said New Company.

ARTICLE XVI

That all the Wintering Partners of the said Old and New Company, or those who may become Partners of the present Joint Concern, shall have an equal right and privilege of coming down to Montreal in rotation according to a rule to be agreed upon.

ARTICLE XVII

That no trade or business shall be undertaken or carried on by the said joint concern but what is properly understood to be the FUR TRADE or necessarily depending thereon without the express consent and acquiescence of the Representatives or Agents of the said New Company, except the Fisheries carried on at the different posts below Quebec, now leased by the said Old Company.

The object of the Joint Company.

ARTICLE XVIII

That each of the said Parties to these presents shall, as soon as conveniently may be, make up an account of their advances for the said joint trade for the year one thousand eight hundred and five, and of which regular entries shall be made accordingly.

ARTICLE XIX

That the Inventories of the goods and debts at the respective posts of the said Old and New Companies in the Interior Country shall be received and taken in the state they are produced at the said place of General Depot the next summer, those at the other depots, Lake Lapluie included and on the communication, shall be considered as definitive but all the others shall be verified in the Interior Country when taken in the Fall of the year one thousand eight hundred and five; And the respective Parties to these Presents shall not be bound to each other for the amount of such Inventories until the thirtieth day of November one thousand eight hundred and six.

ARTICLE XX

....(1)

XXI

No competition allowed.

And it is hereby understood and agreed that none of the Parties to these presents nor any Person or Persons who may hereafter become a Partner or Partners of the said Joint Concern shall directly or indirectly carry on or be concerned in any separate trade at any of the posts or places now occupied or that may be hereafter occupied and traded to by the said Concern, nor sell or supply goods or furnish aid and support to any Person or Persons trading to the same posts or places with the said Joint Company under the penalties contained in the aforesaid articles of agreements of the said Old Company bearing date the said fifth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and two. It is however well understood and agreed that the selling of Goods and furnishing supplies by any Partner or Partners of the said Joint Company to any Person or Persons trading to or at any Posts or Places the waters whereof fall into the Mississippi or any other part or place to the Southward of Lake Superior reckoned from the mouth of the River St. Louis shall not be considered as a breach of the present agreement and no penalty shall attach on or be incurred by the Partners or Partner who may have so sold goods and furnished such aid supplies, but no goods shall be sold by any Partner or Partners of the said Joint Concern to be taken or carried into the Interior of the said North-West Country by the route of the said River St. Louis and if any

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(1) **Special provisions relating to the Firm of MacTavish Frobisher & Co.**

Person or Persons who may have purchased goods or received supplies and aid from any Partner or Partners of the said Joint Concern shall without the consent of such Partner or Partners go into the said Interior Country by the route of the said River St. Louis or by the Mississippi, Missouri, or any other indirect route, and trade to any post or place occupied by the said Joint Company or where they may carry on trade at the time provided the same be to the Northward of the above described limits, then and in such case the Agents of the said Joint Concern shall give notice thereof in writing to such Partner or Partners, whereby he or they shall be required to desist from selling goods to equipping supplying aiding or supporting such Person or Persons so trading as aforesaid in, to, or at the same places with the said Joint Company and in opposition to their interests. And in case such Partner or Partners of the said Joint Concern shall after such notice given and requisition made still persist to furnish Goods and afford supplies support and aid to such person or persons so continuing his or their said trade such Partner or Partners shall then be considered to have committed a breach of the present agreement and be liable to all tho penalties aforesaid.

AND FINALLY it is agreed that the said Parties to These Presents have hereby negociated and coalesced upon principles of equality and reciprocity of rights excepting as to the Quantum of interest with the influence resulting therefrom and the modifications thereof which the present agreement may be fairly construed to introduce, such principles shall be resorted to in clearing up or settling any difference of opinion should such hereafter arise upon the true construction or import of any of the articles of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS whereof the said Parties to these presents have to two parts hereof set and subscribed their names and

affixed their seals at Montreal aforesaid, the day and year first above written.

Alex. McKenzie.
Thomas Forsyth, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
John Richardson.
John Forsyth.
Alex. Ellice, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
John Haldane, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
Thom's Forsyth, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
John Richardson, } Trustees and assignees of the Estate of
John Forsyth, } the late firm of Leith, Jamieson & Co.
John Inglis, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
James Forsyth, by John Richardson and John Forsyth, his atts.
John Ogilvie.
John Mure, by John Ogilvie, his atty.
P. de Rocheblave, by Alex. MacKenzie, his atty.
Alex. MacKenzie, by Alex. MacKenzie, his atty.
John Macdonald, by Alex. MacKenzie. his atty.
James Leith, by Alex. MacKenzie, his atty.
John Wills, by Alex. MacKenzie, his atty.
John Finlay, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Duncan Cameron, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
James Hughes, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Alex. McKay, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts
Hugh McGillis, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Alex Henry, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John MacGillivray, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
James MacKenzie, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Simon Fraser, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.

John D. Campbell, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
D. Thompson, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John Thomson, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John Gregory.
Wm MacGillivray.
Duncan MacGillivray, by Wm MacGillivray, his atty.
Wm Hallowell.
Rod. McKenzie.
Angus Shaw, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Dl. McKenzie, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Wm. McKay, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John McDonald, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Donatd McTavish, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John McDonell, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Arch. N. McLeod, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Alex. MacDougal, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Chs Chaboillez, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
John Sayer, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Peter Grant, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Alex. Fraser, by John Gregory and Wm MacGillivray, his atts.
Eneas Cameron, by John Gregory & Wm MacGillivray, his atts.

Signed and sealed and delivered in the presence of

Edw'ds Wm Gray,
Fred'k W. Ermatinger.









